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Policy paper 3: National urban policy*

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) hereby transmits a policy paper entitled "National urban policy", prepared by the members of Policy Unit 3.

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Policy paper 3: National urban policy

Executive summary

A national urban policy is both a process and an outcome that harnesses the dynamism of cities and urbanization. Urbanization presents unprecedented opportunities, but also substantial challenges. Governments and other stakeholders must be well prepared and have frameworks for urban development in place. A national urban policy complements and reinforces rather than replicates local urban policies. It also helps align national activities with global priorities. A national urban policy sets out the principles from which urban policy interventions are formulated and implementation is conceived. Results rest on a clear strategy and effective coordination between policies that affect national territorial concerns across the urban-rural continuum, metropolitan, regional and supranational scales.

This policy paper outlines key issues and policy recommendations regarding the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy as a means to achieving the New Urban Agenda. Building on the Habitat III issue papers, extensive literature reviews, the inputs of experts of Policy Unit 3, and the revision of inputs from Member States and accredited stakeholders, the paper reiterates and elaborates on the use of a national urban policy as a means of securing the post-2030 sustainable development agenda.

By definition, a national urban policy touches on all aspects of the New Urban Agenda, but this paper gives particular attention to questions of policy challenges (sect. II), policy priorities (sect. III), key actors (sect. IV), and policy design, implementation and monitoring (sect. V). To produce this paper, the expert group met in Paris, Incheon, Republic of Korea, and London.

The paper identifies a number of challenges. For instance, it argues that at the initial stage, it is important to establish the need for, and to build the political and social will to develop and implement, a national urban policy. In some contexts, policies that foster urbanization fail to find support because urbanization is viewed mainly as a problem rather than as an opportunity to increase quality of life, economic prosperity and well-being. This fear of urbanization then often becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy: the unwillingness to engage in active preparation usually does not prevent urbanization but does substantially increase the risk of fostering badly functioning cities. In the designing stage of a national urban policy, other chailenges identified include articulating shared objectives, defining the scope of the policy, keeping flexibility while maintaining predictability, achieving coordination across sectoral policies, designing the governance of the process, and balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches. Further, for both planning and monitoring, gathering legitimate and robust data to provide the evidence base is a major constraint. Finally, it should be recognized that a national urban policy represents both a technical and a political process, and that combining technical strength with political commitment and support from stakeholders is necessary to make it transformative.

A successful national urban policy should generate transformative outcomes in terms of how different levels of government work together to design, implement, monitor and evaluate policies for sustainable urbanization. More specifically, a national urban policy can strengthen the alignment of national and local policies

affecting urban development; empower local authorities and communities, grass-roots organizations, social and traditional leaders, women's movements and civil society at large; promote shared urban dividends throughout the territory and actors, and increase investment in urban areas by improving the business environment; and foster cooperation and collaboration across jurisdictions, for instance by overcoming metropolitan fragmentation. As an ultimate goal, a national urban policy can improve urban quality of life and well-being. To achieve such transformations, beyond the national urban policy itself, the process through which it is achieved is important.

Section III proposes the criteria for defining policy priorities and sets out the priorities for a national urban policy. A national government will identify its own domestic priorities through a national urban policy process, however there are urban issues of common international concern, including addressing urban poverty, promoting equitable opportunity, structuring the urban systems and the connectivity among cities to support sustainable development, facilitating urban policies and governance at a metropolitan scale, promoting urban-rural linkages, etc.

In section III, this policy paper also proposes the following targets: (a) by 2020, two thirds of the member countries will have initiated the process for developing a national urban policy, or will be reviewing their existing national urban policy framework; (b) by 2025, half of the member countries will have formulated and initiated the implementation of a national urban policy; and (c) by 2030, one third of the member countries will have monitored and evaluated their national urban policy. In addition, for all initiated national urban policies, the paper recommends: (a) stakeholder participation mechanisms in the process of developing a national urban policy; and (b) an institutionalized mechanism that ensures the coordination of national policies that materially affect cities.

Section IV discusses key actors for action in the national urban policy process. The section highlights key actors, both internal and external, that should be in the national urban policy process. However, the section is cognizant that approaches to national urban policy development will be different and governments should consider a demand approach that is responsive to the needs of people. In this sense, the key actors are also varied and represent the interests of the groups they belong to. Finally, the section considers essential processes such as the building of capacity and the raising of awareness, which are important for building an enabling environment for the creation of a national urban policy and furthermore, that will contribute to the achievement of the New Urban Agenda.

Section V recognizes that for successful implementation, a national urban policy needs to be legitimate, based on a legal foundation, integrated and actionable, monitored effectively, and supported by mechanisms that ensure continuity while allowing for necessary adjustment. This policy paper recommends the following eight tangible actions: (a) establishing a technical and political consensus on a national urban policy, including the objective, the value added, contents and scope, and the time frame; (b) engaging all the key stakeholders from the outset of the national urban policy process; (c) creating a national and shared vision/strategy for urban policies, with clear objectives, targets, responsible institutions, and implementation and monitoring mechanisms; (d) reviewing and adjusting existing national legal, institutional and fiscal frameworks and guidelines of all sectors in light of the agreed urban strategy; (e) maximizing the use of technology to help

evidence-based decision-making; (f) establishing a participatory mechanism to facilitate policy dialogues among national and subnational levels, as well as between State and non-State actors; (g) establishing a global mechanism — such as an intergovernmental panel — to stimulate policy-relevant research to support national urban policies and the implementation of the New Urban Agenda; and (h) building capacity (human, institutional, financial and technical) at all levels of government.

Section V also recommends that national urban policy frameworks need to be monitored and evaluated effectively. This paper suggests that outcome monitoring could be linked to the Sustainable Development Goals reporting system, as most national urban policy targets are likely to be related to Sustainable Development Goal targets. Successful conception and implementation of a national urban policy could be monitored and evaluated in the context of whether the policy answers nationally defined goals in the short, medium and long term, and whether the vision of the national urban policy is mainstreamed into departmental programmes and policies. When developing indicators for monitoring and evaluation, measurability through access to adequate data sources that allow comparison with a baseline scenario, as well as the use of participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques, should be considered.

To conclude, this paper presents key recommendations from the expert panel for inclusion in the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda. The recommendations on a national urban policy are to: build on international agreements; adopt flexible institutional forms; foster leadership to drive a national urban policy; promote inclusive and equitable engagement in the national urban policy process; address sustainability and resilience through long-term planning; ensure coordinated action; identify priority issues at all scales; strengthen policy capacity for policy design and implementation; adopt and implement an effective communication plan for the national urban policy; and strengthen the evidence base through improved data.

I. Vision and framework of the policy paper's contribution to the New Urban Agenda

A. A national urban policy

1. It is estimated that that the global urban population will have increased from less than 1 billion in 1950 to roughly 6 billion by 2050, and to around 9 billion by 2100, corresponding to close to 85 per cent of the projected total population. This growth requires a coordinated policy to manage and guide future urbanization patterns. The geography of urbanization is also changing. In most European, Northern American and East Asian countries, urbanization is significantly established in existing city forms and infrastructure, with some countries even facing population decline and shrinking cities. In sharp contrast, developing and emerging countries have an unprecedented opportunity to ensure their rapid urbanization processes result in well-functioning and environmentally sustainable cities.

2. A national urban policy is able to establish the connection between the dynamics of urbanization, demographic dynamics and the overall process of national development. It can help to harness the benefits of urbanization while

responding to its challenges through the development of a much broader, crosscutting vision of an urban landscape. A national urban policy is intended to achieve better urban results by, firstly, helping to align sectorial policies that affect urban areas, and secondly, by developing an enabling institutional environment. Thus, a national urban policy complements rather than replaces local urban policies by embracing urbanization across physical space, by bridging urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and by assisting governments to address challenges such as integration and climate change through national and local development policy frameworks.

B. How a national urban policy can contribute to global norms and frameworks and the implementation of a New Urban Agenda

3. A national urban policy touches on and is relevant to many of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 11 on cities, Goal 6 on sanitation and Goal 8 on economic development. In fact, most of the Goals have evident urban dimensions and cannot be achieved without addressing what happens in urban areas. Due to this widespread relevance, a national urban policy should constitute an important part of any serious attempt to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and should become a key instrument to measure the achievement of the Goals.

4. Cities must also be at the centre of actions to tackle climate change. With an increasing majority of populations living in cities, they will be the decisive place for reducing carbon emissions to sustainable levels. Cities will also bear the brunt of climate-related disaster risks. To rise to these challenges will require coordination and alignment mechanisms across different levels of government in designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating climate policies at the city level. In this regard, a national urban policy can be a key instrument to coordinate national and local climate policies for the implementation of the Paris Agreement achieved at COP21.

5. Finally, a national urban policy has the power to shape urbanization and thereby to contribute to the development of productive and prosperous cities. Implementing the New Urban Agenda will not only require action from cities but also various forms of support from national (and in certain contexts regional) governments. This support will not be sufficiently effective without a strategic vision and a clear national policy framework. Consequently, a national urban policy should be recognized as a key lever towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

C. Preparation of the policy paper on national urban policy

6. This policy paper was prepared by experts selected through the Habitat III process and assigned to the Policy Unit 3 on National Urban Policies. Experts prepared and contributed through two Expert Group Meetings (Paris, France in November and Incheon, Korea, in December 2015), one write-shop (London, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in February, 2016) and additional virtual meetings. The paper outlines key policy considerations for the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy. The paper is structured around the following four themes: (a) challenges; (b) priorities; (c) actors; and (d) implementation. Each of these four sections offers actions and

activities to be considered. Following the guidance from the policy paper template presented by the Habitat III secretariat and the review of the 22 Habitat III issue papers, the findings and recommendations are based on insights and discussions among the experts of the Habitat III Policy Unit 3, key publications on national urban policy and country examples.

II. Policy challenges

7. Global urbanization presents both challenges and opportunities for local and national leaders around the world. Whether it is rapid population increase or loss, (sub)urban sprawl, deindustrialization, climate change, social polarization, shrinking cities and/or other urban challenges, it is clear that cities in both developed and developing countries need plans to promote sustainability and resiliency. Key to sustainable urbanization is coordinating policies that guide and support cities to manage future urbanization patterns.

8. National urban policy must deal with and coordinate responses to complex urban and social challenges that are multifaceted in the causes and are resistant to resolution, including urban poverty, safety, environmental resources, etc. This in itself is a challenge for national urban policy.

9. The section will identify twelve key policy challenges that should be considered when designing, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating national urban policy: governance, inclusion, migration, land access, urban-rural linkages, public/civic space, local economic development, the housing and informal sector, infrastructure, resilience, land-use planning and urban design. The most impactful national urban policy complements rather than replaces local urban policies by embracing urbanization across physical space, by bridging urban, peri-urban and rural areas, and by assisting governments to address these challenges through national and local policy frameworks. Over the next 20 years, the critical role of national and subnational governments in promoting sustainable and resilient urbanization cannot be overstated.

A. Governance and a national urban policy

10. In countries around the world, leaders are facing urban transformations. Both developed and developing countries have unprecedented opportunities to ensure urbanization processes result in well-functioning and environmentally sustainable cities. These opportunities will rise or fall according to how leaders address government processes, rules and regulations, and finance.

11. First and foremost among governance process challenges is whether there is legitimate governance and trusted leadership. Without public consent in leadership, decisions are often undermined. Citizens, and other leaders, frequently question or contest urban policies not grounded in these principles.

12. A corollary is sharing a common language and understanding. Faulty translations or interpretations skew or divert attention from critical policy options. Next is establishing the need for a national urban policy, defining the scope, articulating objectives, and building support in a transparent and inclusive manner. Sifting through competing interests can be time-consuming and at times frustrating;

however, without building a solid foundation, based on dialogue and partnership between different levels of government and other stakeholders, efficiency, equity and effectiveness suffer in the long run. In many parts of the world, urban policies are generally considered to be the responsibility of governments. Redefining the proactive role of national governments to strengthen dialogue and collaboration with local governments and other actors in promoting sustainable urbanization and revitalizing distressed cities is critical.

13. A national urban policy should embrace complexity and flexibility. The policy environment is complex, therefore policies that have weak political and administrative support or that lack coordination between top-down leadership and bottom-up initiatives, often fail due to insufficient trust and support. Fragmented decision-making also complicates urbanization, especially in larger metropolitan areas.

14. The presence or absence of legitimate and robust data at national and local levels, as well as the degree and quality of monitoring and evaluating this information, can either advance or hinder urbanization. The growing interest in smart cities and the subsequent available data, presents new opportunities for urban leaders. Tensions between technical and political processes raise the bar for leaders in ways not previously encountered. A twenty-first century national urban policy must recognize these challenges and respond in a deliberate manner.

15. Governance goes well beyond individual processes, with rules and regulations serving to effectuate key ideas and goals. Rules and regulations that seek to fashion and implement a national urban policy, but which are drafted in an opaque or closed process, can be problematic. Unequal or selective application of a national urban policy will also complicate the management of urbanization. An ineffective national urban policy arises when a government shows inadequate interest in developing a consultation process, with periodic reviews and updates of rules and regulations, as well as in coordinating plans, programmes and regulations horizontally and vertically.

16. Development monitoring is often not properly instituted in urban areas due to inadequate resources that include human resources as well as system resources. Moreover, many local governments and grass-roots institutions in urban and rural areas are not empowered to undertake this function.

17. Another component of governance is finance. A lack of adequate financial resources at the national and subnational levels hinders the potential for enhanced management of urbanization. How those resources are raised and allocated can also compromise the efficacy of urban policies. Inefficient, ineffective and inequitable systems of public finance on the local or national level confound the management of urbanization and the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy.

B. Inclusive national urban policy

18. Leaders are often confronted with the challenges of inclusion. A national urban policy that discourages processes that are open and accessible to communities is open to be challenged in the long run. In addition, leaders must consider ethnic, cultural, race, religious, class, gender orientation and other differences among

people. Failure to identify and build a consensus on these issues has historically been an impairment to sustainable urbanization. A national urban policy has the opportunity to build and institutionalize participatory and inclusive policy processes.

C. Addressing migration in national urban policy

19. Relatedly, migrations around the world add complication to urbanization policies. Cities and countries are increasingly being affected by internal or external conflicts and strife. Ignoring the impacts of migration can result in increased violence and other social harms, particularly against women and children. Creating opportunities for acceptance without losing existing culture is the challenge of the twenty-first century. Additional challenges of migration include the exclusion of migrants from basic services and policy decision-making processes. This has a negative impact both in the well-being of migrants and on sustainable socioeconomic development of urban areas. A national urban policy can coordinate with migration policies in order to include migrants in policy decisions and facilitate the protection of labour rights, including migrant workers, and implementing non-discriminatory laws and policies.

D. Ensuring land access and availability through a national urban policy

20. In many cases, increasing urbanization and chaotic land governance has raised the cost and reduced the availability of land in cities, mainly for vulnerable groups. The absence of a transparent system of land regulation undermines democracy and erodes the possibility of realizing the right to housing. Without plans for ensuring sufficient available land for development and conservation, the costs of housing and of commercial and other development skyrocket, thwarting inclusive urbanization. Inadequate and inappropriate land regulations, ineffective plans and the absence of adequate policies and programmes create bottlenecks for generating fair and equitable land use in the city. Dysfunctional urban land markets stifle opportunity, make infrastructure investment complicated, distort service provision and create unsustainable urban settlements.

E. National urban policy and land use planning

21. Land use (or spatial) planning is necessary for sustainable urban development. However, many developing countries do not give priority to this function. At times, this leads to informal land development and/or (sub)urban sprawl.

22. A national urban policy should emphasize the need for land-use planning and for empowering local governments to ensure efficient land-use management (ranging, that is, from general planning schemes and interim land-use plans to detailed neighbourhood plans). National infrastructure plans and policies must complement other urban policies. Comprehensive National Territorial Plans can provide an opportunity to promote quality urban environments.

F. A national urban policy that strengthens urban-rural linkages

23. Increasing urbanization can and should provide an ideal opportunity to tackle peri-urban and rural areas and their challenges. Cities and urban areas do not exist in a vacuum. A national urban policy should take into account the interdependency among urban, peri-urban and rural areas. Rural areas must be recognized within functional urban areas (FUA), however the importance of linkages to rural goes beyond the FUA. Policies need to address this, especially with respect to development of infrastructure and management of ecosystem services (land and water, in particular). Furthermore, rapidly urbanizing countries need to understand whether and to what extent urbanization is driven by rural-push factors rather than urban pull as this has implications for the economic dynamics of agglomeration; inefficient agglomeration may result if people are driven to cities for security or for consumption opportunities rather than for productive opportunities. Rural development policies, though, are often distinct from national urban policies, and therefore need to be considered within them.

24. A national urban policy is not a sectorial policy and shall not be viewed to be in contradiction with "rural policy". Ignoring peri-urban and rural concerns can undermine public support for a national urban policy.

G. Ensuring quality public/civic space through a national urban policy

25. Sustainable urbanization is grounded in the need for quality public/civic space. While local plans and programmes often foster the inclusion of public/civic space in developments and communities, a national urban policy can link these places and focus development to take advantage of the benefits of a high-quality environment. It is important that a national urban policy provides clear policy recommendations on the creation, protection and management of public space as a means to generate wealth, improve well-being and advance urban productivity. Provision of public/civic space can be complicated by inadequate supply, unclear ownership, insufficient availability or accessibility, inadequate location and poor quality of location or resources. A gender approach can be used in order to understand the needs of women and girls in public/civic spaces.

H. Local economic development and municipal finance: key for a successful national urban policy

26. Urbanization is an investment. Clearly, well-planned urbanization is correlated with wealth and job creation, service provision and infrastructure development, and the economic benefits go beyond cities to contribute to aggregated growth at the regional and national level. Though planning for urbanization may appear to be a significant upfront cost, urbanizing can yield long-terms gains which recoup the cost, providing that the urbanization is well designed and is based on sound financial plans. Indeed, central to sustainable urbanization is the availability of human and financial capital. Often, an ineffective national urban policy has a weak connection between economic development policies and other urban policies, resulting in a silo approach to governance. However, an efficient, effective and equitable application of economic development policies across urban and

metropolitan areas and throughout a nation can avoid the mistakes of "chasing ratables" and other actions that some cities and countries currently employ to secure a business by offering exorbitant tax incentives or other giveaways that benefit few people but cost the entire city or nation. Strategies used to promote local economic development should make an effort to support businesses led by e.g. women, the urban poor or young entrepreneurs, including in micro commerce or home production. Furthermore, the use of tools such as land-based financing and land value sharing can help in building a municipal finance base.

27. As evidenced in a number of countries around the world, urbanization itself does not guarantee good economic performance. Urbanization is a necessary — albeit not sufficient — condition for economic development. Well planned urbanization, facilitated through strong urban planning and urban policy, can form a stronger link between urbanization and productive and prosperous cities.

I. Housing, informal sector and a national urban policy

28. Housing is a theme that is both a challenge and an opportunity, as it represents a convergence of social and economic development, and environmental sustainability. Housing provision is a powerful instrument for the promotion of equitable cities and for addressing the world's growing inequality concerns. Housing policy needs to be coordinated with the provision of well-located and connected land, infrastructure and social services, and integrated to social and economic development opportunities. There are a broad range of housing alternatives/solutions that have been used at different scales and with different models, including rental housing, rental vouchers, progressive housing, improvements and expansion, cooperative housing, and large-scale developments. Equally important and complex is the social component related to housing and the need to tackle sensitive issues such as resettlement in a fair and sustainable way. For national urban policy, real challenge is to have a broad assessment of the state of housing and to identify the best policy and programmatic options relative to the availability of financial resources, expertise, political consensus and will.

29. Informality that includes settlements and informal economic activities poses one of the greatest challenges facing many cities and nations today. Social, economic and environmental factors are exacerbating the growing and expanding informality, and demand the attention of city and national leaders. Few cities or nations offer legal protection to those whose homes and livelihoods are informal. The capacity of governance systems to encompass informality in land rights is of special importance to promoting sustainable and inclusive urban settlements. When formulating a national urban policy, the complexities of dealing with upgrading and integration of informal settlements, addressing aspects such as land tenure, connectivity and mobility, implementing adequate infrastructure and house improvements must always be considered. Often, these settlements are ignored, or land development decisions devolve into demolition and dispersion of settlers, rather than recognizing, rehabilitating or redeveloping inadequate settlements.

J. Infrastructure and basic services provision through a national urban policy

30. In many cases, the most effective national urban policy is grounded in infrastructure development and services. However, even the most innovative policies fail if the planning process is exclusive or opaque, or if the policies are not linked to plans, programmes and regulations. An ineffective national urban policy is characterized by a lack of a strategic application of infrastructure to drive growth and an absence of periodic monitoring and evaluation of systems. A national urban policy that fails to consider and address long-term operations and maintenance can result in inefficient and ineffective management of infrastructure.

31. A national urban policy should promote an integrated approach for the provision of a variety of infrastructure systems. It should also support cities' undertakings in that regard, including for transportation and mobility, housing, energy, water and wastewater, natural systems, agriculture, public buildings, communications and technology. While each of these systems could pose complex and, at times, confounding challenges, they provide the arteries of life for many people, both women and men, and fuel the city and its metropolitan region. Drafting, adopting, implementing and monitoring national and regional infrastructure plans, when well-coordinated with a city's plans, can advance economic, environmental and social goals. Providing the institutional setting for proper infrastructure plans and policies at national and local levels is an essential role of a national government.

K. A national urban policy and adaptation, resilience and incorporating the green agenda

32. The regular occurrence of extreme climate events that result in disasters with often drastic impacts on people's possessions and urban infrastructure, and sometimes people's lives, is testimony to the need to integrate resilience measures in any national urban policy. Resilience measures aim to anticipate or address natural or human-made disasters. Many national urban policies fail to address the potential for disasters, let alone considering how to prevent, mitigate and/or adapt to them. Recent disasters around the world remind us of the critical nature of resilience planning for cities and their regions. The lack of available resources continues to undermine effective planning and management of cities. Conducting urban vulnerability assessments and making residents aware of their environment must be part of a national urban policy. These assessments must recognize the social capital inherent in the city and region (including rural areas), and cover social, economic, physical and environmental factors.

33. The link between urbanization and climate change is evident but far from simple. While urban environments are more efficient and can reduce energy use as well as carbon emissions, if they are not well planned they can also contribute to increasing pollution and other negative effects.

L. Urban planning and design for a national urban policy

34. In many cities around the world, there is insufficient public understanding of the critical role physical design plays and its impact on the lives of women and men.

While many people can cite examples of places they love to live in or visit, few know how these places came to be, let alone how to build new streets, neighbourhoods or cities that lead to a better quality of life.

35. Urban design is often a casualty of short-term considerations, where the immediate return on investment takes precedence over long-term opportunities. Indeed, few cities and nations employ urban design professionals, let alone include these considerations in local or national policies or plans. Often this is due to the lack of adequate resources and of available professionals at city level.

36. With little information available on positive examples, there is a need for case studies and other date that can inform national urban policies to produce plans, regulations and programmes that ultimately result in cities where people want to live, work and raise a family. The New Urban Agenda should promote national urban policy and place a high priority on quality urban design in order to improve the productivity of metropolitan areas, secondary cities and small towns and settlements. Urban design must attend to the demands and needs of all the people who live in urban areas, including indigenous groups, domestic and international migrants, disabled people, women, children and the elderly.

37. National and local leadership is key to addressing urbanization and promoting a national urban policy that stands the test of time. Leadership that recognizes the value and importance of urban design, as well as the other 11 key issues listed above, will go far towards ensuring that cities around the world are sustainable, resilient and desirable. A national urban policy that considers these challenges, creates an enabling legal and institutional environment, and incorporates a vision, a framework, as well as actions and metrics to measure success are critical to the future of people and the planet. The next section will consider policy options for national urban policy and the process of prioritization of those options.

III. Prioritizing policy options: transformative actions for the New Urban Agenda

38. Although nation states have signed up to high-level development agreements (the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Framework, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development) that have a direct bearing on the rights of people, the response of national and local governments to urbanization, local circumstances and political priorities will vary greatly. Strategic choices have to be made about priorities and sequencing during the national urban policy process, as there will undoubtedly be a range of issues to be managed (money, people, infrastructure, biodiversity, ecosystems, urban form/design, internal and external connectivity, essential services (water, transport, health), etc.). This section will outline policy options for national urban policy and also discuss the process of prioritization of these options, finally outlining key recommendations that, it is suggested, should be taken into account when prioritizing policy options.

A. Process of prioritization

39. Prioritization of urban policy and practice is an essential and important process affecting local, national and regional governments and the interactions

between them and non-government parties, including the private sector and civil society. national urban policy must deal with principles and processes but should result in publicly endorsed transformations in legal frameworks, norms and standards, capacity, size and shape of civil service, budget, etc. (see box 1). The extent of that transformation may depend on whether the country has a national urban policy in place already, or not. Through a review of Habitat III issue papers and a consideration of the challenges for national urban policy, this policy paper identifies the following criteria for defining policy priorities:

(a) The process for defining urban policy priorities needs to be underpinned by a strong communications strategy (prefaced by the careful mapping of stakeholders and identification of interests and potential roles and responsibilities to introduce the process and including an invitation for all to be involved). An inclusive dialogue aiming to establish a consensus, involving all the key actors, is critical for successful definition of priorities and implementation and legitimacy of the national urban policy; if all parties are to be fully engaged in the definition of priorities and the implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the national urban policy, they need them to be involved from the start and need to have full access to data and other relevant information;

(b) Priority-setting must be based on an adequate and effective assessment of the status quo — the evidence base (stocktaking) is critical; this implies a strong technocratic/expert component to accompany a broadly inclusive process. The evidence base, though, must encompass non-statistical evidence as well as "hard" data, lest the priorities be distorted by ease of measurement or availability of data. Within a wider research programme, a continuous monitoring process is desirable to improve the national evidence base to support improved policy decision-making;

(c) Realistic capacity (financial, professional, human, and institutional) must be considered when developing policy priorities. Priorities can be in the short, medium, and long term and should be affordable, politically feasible and efficient/effective. Political feasibility is the key to implementing any proposal for change. An exhaustive list of desirable objectives, with no hierarchical ordering or link to urgency/feasibility, should be seen as a wish list, not a set of priorities;

(d) A national urban policy should be based on a governance model that allows for the needs, demands, suggestions and active participation by key stakeholders (also important for implementation), improving the levels of transparency, equity and accountability. The determining of policy priorities should also be based on the same governance principles;

(e) Building capacity and knowledge sharing are essential in order to develop priorities based on realistic expectations, and therefore priorities that are implementable. Opportunities in the form of partnerships with academic institutions, private sectors, NGOs, civil society organizations, etc. can enhance knowledge sharing and promote capacity-building;

(f) Policy priorities must consider the overall impacts of the national urban policy, such as the people affected, environmental, economic, and social impacts, etc. All policy priorities must be based on a firm foundation of understanding of the context. Particular attention could be paid to: the level of government with an urban mandate, reviews of existing legislation, policy instruments, levels of institutionalization, stakeholders, etc.;

(g) Opportunities for intensified peer-to-peer exchange and knowledge sharing between countries will be necessary to enrich a national urban policy and can offer comparative perspectives and ensure integration of urban systems that cross boundaries. For example, every town and city has to manage land and finances more effectively, equitably and sustainably, making land and money a concern and priority for all countries. Proper financial management, land-use planning and high-quality urban design can contribute to achieving this; as shared concerns, these may be ideal entry points for peer-to-peer learning around national urban policy making.

Box 1
Key transformations expected through successful national urban policy

Successful national urban policy can enable the following key transformations:

(a) Increasing the coherence of national and local policies affecting and relevant to urban development (territorial/spatial impact of national sectoral policies). Selected relevant national and local policies are: economic policies (which impact the economic impact (e.g. job creation) that urbanization can bring), land, public service, safety and security, housing, certain infrastructure, climate, natural resources/environment, mobility, and social policies. Increasing coherence at the policy level can improve administrative effectiveness and resource flows at the metropolitan level;

(b) Empowering local authorities by building capacity, rebalancing fiscal systems and giving legal and political mandate;

(c) Empowering communities, grass-roots organization, social and traditional leaders and civil society at large by providing them tools for monitoring and evaluating policies and increasing participatory mechanisms in budgeting and/or policymaking processes;

(d) Improving investment in cities by improving the business environment;

(e) Fostering cooperation and collaboration across jurisdictions by overcoming metropolitan fragmentation and discouraging "race-to the-bottom" competitions (e.g. regulatory competition, harmful competition that prevents local governments from collecting sufficient revenue);

(f) Improving quality of life and well-being (poverty, accessibility, environmental quality, etc.). While the components of this improvement will vary according to challenges and contexts, improved quality of life is the ultimate aim.

B. Key priorities

40. Nations need to own the process of national urban policy making and implementation, drawing on and strengthening their own resources. A national government, with inputs from subnational governments and other stakeholders, will identify its own domestic priorities through a national urban policy process, however

there are urban issues of common international concern: the most obvious example is climate change, where what happens in an individual city has ramifications across the world. Equally important issues that make cities pathways of global environmental change, and which therefore have national, regional, and global impacts that should be considered by local, national, and global urban policy makers, include the following:

(a) Reducing urban poverty and promoting equitable opportunity in cities. Addressing issues of inclusion, segregation, informal settlements, urban land management reform, gender equality and housing should be at the centre of a national urban policy. In order to tackle such multifaceted and cross cutting urban challenges, strong national support is needed in these thematic areas;

(b) Urban safety and security in cities with particular reference to urban governance, local economic development and impacts on vulnerable populations, such as women, children, youth and the elderly;

(c) Structuring the urban systems (from large to medium to small cities) and the connectivity among cities to support sustainable development of the country. The structure of the urban system matters for growth. Because cities do not exist in isolation, sustainable connectivity at all scales (including with rural areas) is increasingly important to the performance of national urban systems. For example, national decisions about major infrastructure networks can have a tremendous impact on cities' competitiveness and growth potential;

(d) Facilitating urban policies and governance at a metropolitan scale. Inter-municipal co-ordination typically requires support from higher levels of government. There has been increasing attention in recent years to the benefits of governing cities as functional economies rather than administrative units. Higher levels of government can have a role in facilitating the cross-jurisdictional cooperation that is needed to improve the outcomes in complex metropolitan areas;

(e) Promoting urban-rural linkages;

(f) Adequate financing of the national urban policy process, particularly the implementation. Managing and modernizing existing funding instruments and adopting new instruments for supra-municipal funding;

(g) Migration and remittances;

(h) Protected public space and cultural/heritage;

(i) Transparency and reducing corruption;

(j) Gender equality;

(k) Promoting inclusive economic growth;

(l) Health and well-being;

(m) Robust and comparable urban scale data (qualitative and quantitative, formal and informal);

(n) Urban planning, design, infrastructure and building materials;

(o) Promoting a territorial and differentiated approach by considering key urban and territorial principles, such as those in the International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning. A differentiated approach is needed based on population, needs and social infrastructure. Particularly, empowering local governments through

planning and territorial differentiation of responsibilities and competences based on the administrative capacity and effectiveness, and/or the population-size of cities;

(p) Supporting cities' actions for environmental sustainability, particularly controlling air pollution and climate mitigation or adaptation;

(q) Urban resilience — preparing for disaster risks including adaptation to climate change;

(r) Relevant legal and regulatory frameworks;

(s) Cross sector/cross actor engagement: every country will have to prioritize vertical and horizontal collaboration and harmonization. Formal institutions should be established that recognize the need for institutionalized mechanisms of collaboration (such as councils, commissions, working groups, intergovernmental panels, etc.). The institutional arrangements should promote flexible and inclusive practices which will not privilege formal over informal constituencies, government over non-government parties, national over local, etc.

41. In addition, the following qualifiers for a national urban policy proposed under the Goal 11 will help setting key priorities:

(a) responds to population dynamics;

(b) ensures balanced territorial development;

(c) prepares for infrastructure and services development;

(d) promotes urban land-use efficiency;

(e) enhances resilience to climate change;

(f) protects public space and;

(g) develops effective urban governance systems;

(h) promotes effective municipal finances systems;

(i) supports partnership and cooperation between urban actors;

(j) safeguards inclusiveness and participation in the process and outcomes.

C. Indicators on national urban policy

42. This expert panel reinforces the Sustainable Development Goal indicator recommendation for Target 11.a (support positive economic, social and environmental links between urban, peri-urban and rural areas by strengthening national and regional development planning). The proposed indicator highlights the importance of a national urban policy process as a means of implementing the New Urban Agenda. Furthermore, the use of the national urban policy as an indicator reinforces the role of cities in sustainable development and is a critical contribution to achieving the 2030 Agenda goals.

43. This expert group also proposes the following targets: (a) by 2020, two-thirds of the member countries will have initiated the process for developing a national urban policy, or will be reviewing their existing national urban policy framework; (b) by 2025, half of the member countries will have formulated and initiated the

implementation of a national urban policy; and (c) by 2030, one-third of the member countries will have monitored and evaluated their national urban policy.

D. Key recommendations for the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda

44. The recommendations in box 2 highlight key considerations that can be taken into account when undertaking the process of prioritization of the wide range of policy options that can be considered within a national urban policy. These recommendations from the Expert Group, which are also located in the conclusions of this report, consolidate the pre-conditions for the development and implementation of a successful national urban policy and articulate how such a process might contribute to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the wider post-2030 sustainable development agenda.

Box 2
Key recommendations for the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda:

1. International Agreements: national urban policy has proved to be valuable for implementing the Habitat Agenda and should be further mainstreamed as a critical instrument to implement the New Urban Agenda. The normative base of a national urban policy should additionally reflect existing international agreements including:

   a. Universal Declaration of Human Rights

   b. Paris Agreement

   c. Sendai Framework

   d. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

2. Institutional form: the institutional form of a national urban policy must create channels of participation and take into account the need to affect high-level change, including: legal reform, allocation of fiscal resources, generation of information on the overall urban system (including formal and informal), and integrated long-term urban planning and design that extends beyond the political cycle. Quality of legal frameworks signifies the ability to produce the regulatory reforms required by policy makers. Effective legislation must have a clear purpose, introduce consistent and well-thought-out rules and enforcement mechanisms, and unambiguous rules and obligations. Finally, it must allow for systematic monitoring and evaluation of the results of legislation. Implementing an evidence-based national urban policy process requires investment in civil service, research, university curricula, and educational opportunities.

3. Leadership: there needs to be both formal and informal political leadership from within government and/or from other stakeholders to ensure the legitimacy of the national urban policy process and effectiveness of implementation.

4. Inclusive and equitable: national urban policies need to be inclusive and enable stakeholders to effectively engage in the process, making sure all voices are heard. The outcomes and impact need to promote equality, reach the most vulnerable, those at risk, and the urban poor.

5. Sustainability and resilience: a national urban policy has to address social, economic and ecological dynamics and the interplay between them in the territorial context.

6. Priority issues: a national urban policy should be people-centred and needs to complement and not replicate strong sectorial strategies in areas such as infrastructure, water, energy, health, education, housing or social and economic inclusion policies. Ideally, a national urban policy will address the territorial, fiscal and institutional relationships across sectors. A national urban policy should safeguard the interests and rights of both current and future generations as well as be mindful of the natural ecosystem impacts of policy choices. A national urban policy provides the information platform or process to mediate long term versus short-term priorities across territorial scales, allowing difficult decisions to be debated and communicated with the public.

7. Coordination: a national urban policy should emphasize and facilitate institutionalized and informal coordination and collaboration among different actors, sectors and functions across all scales and systems of cities. Coordination should consider national territorial concerns, including the urban-rural continuum, and metropolitan, regional and supranational urbanization dynamics and issues.

8. Capacity: to be effective, a national urban policy process requires preparation, an institutional host, budget, training and opportunities for in-country and transnational peer-to-peer learning within and across governments and other stakeholders. Effective internal monitoring and evaluation should be built into the process.

9. Communication: the national urban policy process should employ a multimedia communications strategy that is comprehensive and transparent, and is targeted to inform all civil servants, residents, media and other stakeholders both within and outside national boundaries. A communication strategy for a national urban policy should also be used to promote broad awareness on the integrated nature of urban development.

10. Data: a national urban policy should be grounded in the most current and comprehensive qualitative and quantitative data. The process of developing a national urban policy can be used to improve data collection systems and also develop new and additional data to improve disaggregation (e.g. gender and age), coverage (sector and geography) and the interoperability of data. Specific attention must be given to enumerating and making visible all aspects of urban informality. Data collected for a national urban policy needs to engage with global and local systems of data and should be open access.

45. Building on section III, which considers the process of prioritizing policy options and the identification of policy options for a national urban policy, the next section will consider the key actors in the national urban policy process and the development of an enabling environment for national urban policy.

IV. Key actors for action: enabling institutions

46. This section will highlight key actors in the national urban policy process. It will also consider essential processes such as the building capacity and the raising of awareness, which are important for building an enabling environment for the creation of national urban policy and furthermore, that will contribute to the achievement of the New Urban Agenda.

A. Strategic aspects

47. A national urban policy is a long-term and evolving process aimed at the structuring of a broader framework integrated by holistic systems that will create an enabling environment for the establishment, institutionalization and improvement of a country's urban sector and agenda.

48. The national urban policy design must take into account the diversities of approaches, because countries have particularities, even differences, within regions. In this regard, responses to a national urban policy will be different and governments should consider a demand approach that is responsive to the needs of people. In this sense, the key actors are also varied and represent the interests of the groups they belong to.

49. The key stakeholders for a national urban policy are diverse and can play different roles throughout an evolving process in order to (a) design and frame policy; (b) promote cultural and social change; (c) set up the framework of thought and ideas; (d) win new rights within the different dimensions of rights in the city; (e) own and endorse; (f) implement; (g) build capacity; and (h) monitor and evaluate.

50. This process is, within itself, a catalyser of actors and actions through small-scale incremental progress (changes) that can be speeded up and/or amplified by eventual interventions/actions, either top down through the political will of national governments, or bottom up and leveraged by empowered local governments that, in the majority of countries, are leaders in the management of the challenge of urbanization. Movements that are people/society driven and organized are able to promote effective political and social changes, such as the recognition of rights, and the institution of new policies, programmes or participation channels.

51. Critical to this process is the need to develop an adequate institutional, multilevel and multi-stakeholders' framework that fosters dialogue and collaboration in order to ensure the involvement of different levels of government and stakeholders in creating ownership and engagement in the different phases of a national urban policy. National governments should recognize subnational governments as key partners for the development and implementation of a national urban policy, and should empower them by ensuring adequate resources and capacities. Such a process will certainly correspond to the development of political will, thinking and action from several players with contradictory interests. Its effectiveness, reach and impact will largely depend on the way these interests are socially settled, and the capacity of these same actors for seeding and institutionalizing innovation and change, expanding awareness and transforming the culture/mind-set.

52. The cultural aspect is essential to sustaining development; it will be the background to the process, dictating its effectiveness and sustainability. Cultural

and social changes can be triggered from both within and outside, as complementary forces driven by a range of advocates whose constituencies will vary considerably from country to country.

53. Acceptance of the fact that a national urban policy is driven by a multiplicity of arrangements and can take an infinite number of shapes is fundamental to ensuring applicability in various country contexts at the global scale. This means that advocates, thinkers and players who will form the driving force of a national urban policy process will come from different constituencies and are able to act at any point in time with the objective of setting and/or improving the framework within which a national urban policy is embedded.

54. As cities and urban environments increasingly take centre stage for human, social and economic development — putting, at the same time, instrumental pressure on natural ecosystems — it is essential that local authorities are at the fore in raising collective awareness regarding the ecological footprint of cities on their hinterland, and gradually bringing more actors and players into the process of defining the priorities of the national urban policy and related means of implementation.

55. It is critical/essential to have in mind the variety of these stakeholders — hence the need for promoting ownership and reach, taking into account the capacities for contribution and the requirement that all the voices that must be heard.

56. As the critical mass of thinking evolves towards the real and strategic need for a national urban policy, the set of systems will gradually take shape as key stakeholders and their (and others') respective roles become more and more clear.

57. Achieving the formulation and implementation of a national urban policy presupposes that systems have been set up to address conflicts of interest among the various stakeholders, to foster dialogue processes and consensus building, and to mobilize the collective consciousness on the need and urgency for managing urbanization in order to take full advantage of its positive impacts.

B. Actors, sides and levels of action

58. In broader terms, one can identify a set of key actors/players, possible roles and levels of engagement and participation during the process, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national urban policy. Despite the risks of over-simplification, and taking into account the interscale links engendered in the globalization process, key stakeholders can be classified in two groups:

(a) A set of key internal stakeholders:

(i) Community: the overall, broader society (public opinion/media); broader/large-scale social movements and organized civil society (such as homeless movements, public transport activists, non-government organizations (NGOs), women's organizations, etc.) at national, regional or city levels; community leaders. In the design process of the national urban policy, it is important to ensure participation of civil society groups that represent diverse interests and groups, so that the construction process will be collective and with a demand-based approach. A national urban policy has to respond to diverse interests of society, gender, children, elderly, ethnic groups, etc.;

(ii) Governments: national, regional, state/province, metropolitan areas, city (different departments/sectoral policies). Even if, as noted above, local authorities will be key partners for the definition and implementation of a national urban policy, the work required during all stages goes beyond the administrative boundaries of local authorities. In that regard, during implementation, joint work must be promoted between the nation and territorial entities, and among territorial entities, through actions such as: improving territorial organization, identifying and structuring regional strategic projects, strengthening forms of municipal association and cooperation, and promoting knowledge transfer among territorial entities;

(iii) Academia: universities, research centres, think tanks, research and training institutions. The participation of the academic sector is important not only in design, but also potentially in the monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy. Universities, research centres and think tanks are often instrumental in gathering evidence, facts and data that inform the definition of a national urban policy and contribute to assessing its impact on the territories and the different layers of society. University volunteering programmes could make a great contribution with innovative projects and sustainability interventions;

(iv) Legislators and judiciary: these actors play an important role in the implementation of the national urban policy because they will pass the laws and regulations enacting the provisions of the policy and promote legal changes needed to achieve policy objectives. Also, they represent the political forces of the country and may be key drivers and enablers of change from executive and legislative bodies, which will ultimately endorse and strengthen related legal frameworks, thus improving understanding of guidelines, strategies and targets appointed by a national urban policy in order to establish among various constituencies the foundations for decision making and consolidation of jurisprudence;

(v) Funding agencies and the private sector: these actors can contribute resources needed to implement the policy. However, it is important that the public sector guides and articulates their participation in the national urban policy, to ensure the achievement of the objectives for which the policy was designed. The social responsibility of the private sector presents a major opportunity to improve the city or municipal capability, guided by the protection of public goods and interests. Social and environmental corporate responsibility is crucial;

(b) External stakeholders will include:

(i) International organizations, development agencies, the United Nations system. All of these are key in the definition and implementation of the global agendas requiring worldwide mobilization and international financing flows;

(ii) International trends/ other countries that are role models;

(iii) International local and regional government organizations, universities and think tanks with international/global reach;

(iv) International civil society: international/global scale NGOs and social movements;

(v) International and regional political constituencies;

(vi) The international banking system and financial markets: they are instrumental in mobilizing the huge amount of capital investments and urban and real estate developments that the implementation of a national urban policy implies.

59. An effective and sustainable transformation in societies is eminently political. The construction of a national urban policy that is focused on improving the overall well-being, integration and equity of the rights to the city, in spite of segregation and inequalities, will emerge from political will that has to be built and rebuilt over time, among all actors involved at different levels, depending on each specific geographical and evolutionary context. While action derives from implementation capacity that may well be heterogeneous across players/stakeholders, a national urban policy equally has to be built and rebuilt reflecting state of culture/mind, thorough the evolutionary policy process.

60. Major turnarounds may emerge from high-level political settings, driven by the national government, or bottom up from local governments and social mobilization, such as the popular proposition of a new law or even the election of political parties/personalities that would advocate for the urban agenda, or from a combination of both forces. International players might influence the political course of action and strengthen local capacity with technical assistance and funding. But fundamentally, without ownership and endorsement by internal stakeholders, a national urban policy will not be sustained and/or be effective.

61. External incidents, political mobilization and top down/bottom-up initiatives can be triggers for and also speed and scale up national urban policy processes at specific points in time. Nevertheless, incremental evolution is essential for the maturation and institutionalization of a national urban policy in the long run, as well as for strengthening the key stakeholders that will be the pillars for its continuation.

62. Internal actors will have to participate in the national urban policy process to concretely (a) design policies that are properly implemented through (b) empowered local governments and programmes that are adequately (c) funded and structured, backed by a robust (d) legislative framework, well assimilated by the (e) judiciary, endorsed by public opinion, organized civil society and community leaders, using available and new knowledge availed by (f) academia and the dissemination of research to the public with the assistance of (g) the media, making use of all available resources that might be provided by the people/communities, private and public sectors.

63. In order to assume these roles, capacity has to be in place or built throughout the process, enriching and strengthening different constituencies and stakeholders for assuming co-shared responsibility for the continuity of the national urban policy development. Evolution will come from ensuing cycles of thinking, advocacy, design and action by all stakeholders in a very heterogeneous manner, but ultimately the society as a whole will have to take ownership of the process for de facto political change.

64. In order to assure that the process of building awareness and social appropriation of the principles of the New Urban Agenda at the end consolidates as a national urban policy, it is necessary to gradually translate these principles into political and institutional decisions framed by administrative acts that are issued by

government agencies at all levels (national, provincial, interstate, metropolitan and local) and democratic strata (judicial, legislative and executive, in democratic states). Otherwise, these principles remain rhetorical only. This will put at risk the sustainable management of urbanization and will condemn vast social sectors to exclusion and informality; rhetorical principles will not lead to the institutionalization of the new "rules of the game" for all actors (internal and external stakeholders) involved in urbanization.

65. State capacity to implement public policy is shaped by a complex combination of technical-bureaucratic and political capacity (each is itself necessary but not a sufficient condition); it is not homogeneous and may vary between sectors and areas. The construction of combined capacities takes place on the long term, while its destruction can occur with short-term contingency measures. State capacity is closely linked to the worldview or ideological paradigm within which a government is located, as well as the legitimacy and accumulation of power available to a government in order to be able to leverage changes to the status quo; legitimacy and power lie precisely in the ability to interpret the majority's needs and the cultural processes that embody society.

C. How to create enabling environments, set the stage for action and understand the principles and stages of a national urban policy?

66. Enabling environments for the development of a national urban policy entails factors such as proper attribution of roles, mandates, channels of participation, the need for improving communication and transparency, and making all voices clearly heard and incorporated.

67. A sustainable and legitimate process of developing a national urban policy should be based on the following principles to guide key stakeholders and institutions:

(a) Legitimacy;

(b) Ethical/co-shared responsibility;

(c) Collaboration/cooperation/partnership approach, among different levels of governments and public administrations, and with different non-state actors (civil society organization, private sector, academia, etc.);

(d) Transparency/shared information;

(e) Building and strengthening local government and public agencies' capacities towards institutional development;

(f) Just and efficient allocation of attributions and resources between different levels of government to support sustainable urban policies;

(g) Different and complementary levels of engagement/participation, in order to ensure a cascade effect, where even the most vulnerable and distant voices are heard (down to community level);

(h) A process that allows for reviews from time to time as new challenges arise.

68. The stage for action will be set even prior to the political foundations of a national urban policy, as it is a process that will be triggered by a potential

arrangement of actors and actions, as stated earlier, and evolve throughout stages that are interconnected with the development of awareness, conscience and political will. As opportunities arise, they will launch new stages and create new arrangements of actors that will conform to the next phases of the process. These next phases can include a policy paper, a new legal framework, improved decentralization processes, new executive agencies or governance structures, multi-year plans, and/or localizing sectorial policies for better coordination on the ground. There is no ideal sequence to be followed, but rather opportunities will be presented by the overall environment, such as a new government, a social mobilization, changes in the constitution, investment packages/fiscal space, macroeconomic environment, etc. In all cases, a specific set of stakeholders will act as main drivers, and will have the task of promoting broader engagement and dissemination, as a new law is to be approved.

69. The national urban policy process will lead to the institutionalization of participation and channels of participation; this may strengthen the role of key stakeholders but may also deter the emergence of new actors. Therefore a degree of flexibility to incorporate new agents of change will be desirable, which can only happen in flexible environments. In other words, while strong institutions will set the basis for the sustainability of the national urban policy, innovation and reinvention will likely come from new thinking and eventually from new stakeholders (from community to national). The design, implementation, and monitoring of national urban policy, discussed in the next section, are important points within the policy process where the inclusion of both existing stakeholders and of new actors is essential.

V. Policy design, implementation and monitoring

70. High-quality design of a national urban policy, along with its legal, institutional and financial frameworks, is essential to ensure its implementability. Understanding the national urban policy as a continuous process is necessary in order to appreciate that all elements of policy development must be considered throughout. This section will discuss key actions that focus on process-oriented activities and recommendations for a national urban policy rather than the content of the policy itself.

71. Through considering the design of policy and its implementation and monitoring, this section firstly explores how to operationalize a national urban policy, which can be effective in achieving its defined goal and objectives. Secondly, the section highlights how to develop and implement a national urban policy that is legitimate, integrated and actionable, and can be monitored effectively. Finally, recommendations are made to facilitate a policy process and generate mechanisms that help to ensure long-term continuity while allowing for necessary adjustment.

A. Policy design

Understanding the context

72. The design and implementation of a national urban policy shall be cognizant of the context within which it is being developed. The diversity of circumstances within which the national urban policy process can be undertaken means that the design and implementation strategy for the policy shall be driven by the context

(cultural, historical, political, environmental, social, economic etc.). While designing the policy, and in order to fully appreciate and understand this necessary context, consideration can be given to the following:

Building support for and considering the vision/purpose of a national urban policy: Prior to the design of a policy, a proposal for its vision/purpose and objectives, including the value-added, contents and scope, and timeframe, should be developed. The process of defining this purpose or vision and objectives should take into account the country's national/local context and involve a diversity of stakeholders. The process of assessing the feasibility of a national urban policy, prior to the design of the policy, can work to begin creating a consensus regarding the need for policy, based on the vision/purpose and objectives identified for the national urban policy.

73. Mapping of existing legal and institutional frameworks: The mapping existing laws, regulations and institutions relevant to physical and economic planning allows for an initial rapid review of the urban legal and institutional framework. This review will ultimately provide the ability to identify areas of improvements of all the different pieces of legislation and institutions and also to identify and review the administrative boundaries of these pieces of legislation and institutions.

74. Understanding the political economy and institutional settings: All relevant ministries, local governments and stakeholders should take part in the design of a national urban policy to ensure inclusion of a wide range of relevant policies and a general feeling of ownership. To have a clear understanding of various interests and the institutional settings within which the policy will exist, it is recommended that a political economic and governance assessment around the policy process, that includes mapping and analysis of institutions and power relationships, be undertaken. This analysis can include the administrative procedures, decision-making processes, resource allocation and institutional settings. The ultimate goal of the analysis is to understanding the existing instruments, capacity needs, power relationships, and decision points in different urban thematic areas.

75. Empowering stakeholders: One of the aims of a national urban policy should be to empower local governments and other stakeholders in order to fully engage them in the development of an urban vision and coordinating framework in a particular country context. To avoid having stakeholders that act solely as implementation partners, local governments and other key stakeholders should be engaged in the national urban policy process from the beginning. Furthermore, to ensure a process that is participatory and inclusive, undertaking a stakeholder mapping and analysis is recommended, to identify more vulnerable stakeholders that may need extra engagement to participate fully.

Designing for implementation

76. Good policy design is key to the implementability. The implementation of a national urban policy must be considered throughout the design; inadequate consideration of this can result in gaps that can adversely affect the overall effectiveness of the policy. To successfully design a policy that is both relevant and implementable there are four points to consider:

(a) Ownership of policy by local governments and other stakeholders: to successfully implement a national urban policy, the ownership and buy-in of local

governments and other stakeholders is necessary. Establishing a participatory mechanism to facilitate policy dialogues among national and subnational governments, state and non-state actors on national urban policy, is important for ensuring effective participation of all actors;

(b) Assessment and building of capacity: During the designing of the policy, it is necessary to consider the capacity of implementing partners, particularly the capacities of subnational governments. Prior to implementation it is essential both to assess human, institutional, financial and technical capacities and to build capacity at all levels of government and for all implementing partners for formulating, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating the policy. Capacity-building could also be considered for the private sector;

(c) Reviewing and/or adjusting existing national legal, institutional and fiscal frameworks and policies/guidelines of all sectors to ensure the integration and implementation of the national urban policy. National (and, in some federal systems, state/provincial) legislation can define the responsibilities, powers and, crucially, the revenue sources of subnational governments. Accordingly, attention must be paid to the appropriate legislative framework for subnational governments and also to decentralization policies, and to the share of financial resources between different levels of government, so as to create collaborative frameworks for engagement between national and subnational governments. Furthermore, integration and cohesiveness with other sectorial strategies, frameworks, policies, etc., must be considered. To have full support for a national urban policy, conflict with other sectors must be avoided;

(d) Monitoring and Evaluation: A mechanism to revise the national urban policy periodically should be included in the drafting of the policy. The process for monitoring and evaluating should be transparent and go beyond national and subnational governments to involve all relevant non-state actors, such as non-governmental organizations, citizens and the business sector.

B. Means of implementation

Promoting systems change

77. The process of designing and implementing a national urban policy should keep in mind that the value of the policy lies in both the process and the product. Throughout the design of the policy, therefore, certain mechanisms, such as participation and capacity development, can be institutionalized in order to foster more sustainable long-term change, as opposed to isolated policy interventions.

Implementing a national urban policy: iterative policy design and continuous policy review

78. Regular tracking of the implementation of a national urban policy in the form of a continuous policy review is recommended to foster an iterative policy design. Implementing a complex policy therefore can happen in stages. While a forward-thinking policy will have defined long-term goals, lessons learned from interim monitoring can be used to reflect on strengths and weaknesses of the policy to date and adjustments made accordingly.

Possible financing options

79. When considering possibilities for the funding of a national urban policy, alternative financing options are available for consideration. However, an effective policy will require clear ownership by national governments, which can be indicated through financial commitment. Despite this, it is suggested that there are alternative sources that can supplement financial commitments made by national governments.

80. In order to encourage ownership of a national urban policy at other levels of government, sharing of burdens and benefits between levels of government could be a viable option. Prior to considering this, and in order for subnational governments to have the financial capacity to support the policy, it is essential to consider the extent to which the devolution of financial capacity is required in order to facilitate financial support for the policy from subnational governments.

81. To facilitate the participation of subnational governments in the development of a policy, innovative financing mechanisms, such as land value capture and sharing, subsidies and broadening local tax bases and strengthening tax collection, can be considered to enhance municipal financing.

82. Accessing and expanding private investment and finances can be an option for successfully co-financing a national urban policy. There is the opportunity to finance the urban policies through multiple funding sources, both through improved Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and accessing private capital.

83. When building funding options for a national urban policy and if resources are limited, the policy could start with developing some principles, coordination and consultation measures to leverage awareness about the policy. In this case, interventions for the policy should be concentrated on targeted projects which will generate short-term results and build support for funding that can offer opportunities to undertake projects with medium- and long-term outcomes. In this way, the national urban policy can be implemented in the short term with available funding, but still plan for the long term.

C. Monitoring instruments

84. Monitoring a national urban policy will certainly be based on the initial definition of indicators to measure successful conception and implementation. Indicators will vary depending on the priorities reflecting the specific contexts of a country. For example, indicators for a national urban policy can include the following qualifiers:

(a) responds to population dynamics;

(b) ensures balanced territorial development;

(c) prepares for infrastructure and services development;

(d) promotes urban land-use efficiency;

(e) enhances resilience to climate change;

(f) protects public space;

(g) develops effective urban governance systems;

(h) promotes effective municipal finances systems;

(i) supports partnership and cooperation between urban actors;

(j) safeguards inclusiveness and participation in the process and outcomes.

85. The criteria for defining a successful national urban policy will inevitably vary by country. However, it is suggested that a successful policy will, at a minimum, respond to nationally defined urban goals (for addressing issues and harnessing the benefit of urbanization) in the short, medium and long term. Furthermore, in order to ensure the sustainability of policy initiatives, having the vision of the national urban policy mainstreamed into departmental programmes and policies, but also delineated in subnational development plans, could be seen as an indication of success. When considering policy monitoring, there are a number of pertinent recommendations:

(a) Integrate process and outcome evaluation: a national urban policy often sets in motion a multiplicity of policy related processes, and it could be useful to measure both the process and specific policy outcomes. Doing so may facilitate the embedding of programmes that mainstream policy priorities. While outcome evaluation has the ability to consider to what extent the policy achieved its defined goals, an evaluation of process can potentially allow insight into what elements of the process undertaken led to successes or failures;

(b) Anchoring a national urban policy with reliable data and information: both the design and implementation of the national urban policy must be based on policy-relevant research and urban/territorial-relevant data. Lack of either reliable baseline data or reliable interim data can prove a complicating or even inhibiting factor for undertaking both the monitoring and the evaluation of a National Urban policy, as well as its design and implementation. A lack of reliable urban/territorial data (such as cadastre maps) is a constraint that affects the development of relevant urban policy in many countries, and therefore it would be necessary to support collaboration between national statistics offices, government and civil society organizations for the production and use of localized data. The collection of localized urban/territorial data can be through methods such as the self-enumeration of people and activities, including informal settlements and slum areas. The establishment of global mechanisms, such as an international and independent panel, is highly recommended to stimulate policy-relevant research and produce reliable data on urban issues to support the development of a national urban policy and more broadly, the implementation of the New Urban Agenda;

(c) Participatory monitoring/stakeholders: in order to facilitate an open and participatory policy monitoring process, the use of participatory monitoring and evaluation techniques is recommended to ensure that the process is open to all stakeholders;

(d) Linking national urban policy monitoring with global monitoring efforts: there is an opportunity for outcome monitoring to be closely linked to a Sustainable Development Goals reporting system. As demonstrated in the section below, many aspects of a national urban policy are clearly related to Sustainable Development Goal targets and indicators (including their qualifiers).

D. Linkages with the 2030 Agenda

86. As highlighted above, a national urban policy is a powerful tool for government to plan for and direct the many facets of urbanization, and for it to be a net contributor to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Accordingly, a policy has the ability to influence and impact many target areas of the Sustainable Development Goals. As an overarching and process, the national urban policy will be able to anchor and influence many dimensions of sustainable development, such as air pollution control and regulation. The tabie below contains examples of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets for which there are direct links with national urban policy outcomes and for which the outcomes of a policy can be used to define indicators.

Examples of Sustainable Development Goals and targets with links to national urban policy

Goals	*Targets*
Goal 1: poverty eradication	Targets 1.4 and 1.5: land tenure security and resilience
Goal 2: food security, nutrition and agriculture	Targets 2.3 and 2.a: land tenure security and urban-rural linkages
Goal 3: health	Target 3.9 pollution, 3.6 road fatalities, 3.8 access to universal health coverage, 3.9 hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination.
Goal 5: gender	Target 5.2: safety and 5.a ownership and control over land
Goal 6: water	Targets 6.1 and 6.2: access to drinking water and sanitation
Goal 7: energy	Targets 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3: access to renewable energy and energy efficiency
Goal 8: economic growth and employment	Targets 8.3, 8.5 and 8.6: job creation, decent work and youth unemployment
Goal 9: infrastructure and industrialization	Targets 9.1, 9.4 and 9.a: access to and upgrading and financing infrastructure
Goal 10: reduce inequality	Target 10.4 discriminatory laws
Goal 11: inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and human settlements	Targets from 11.1-11.7 and 11.a-11c.
Goal 12: sustainable consumption and production	Target 12.5: waste management

Goals	*Targets*
Goal 13: climate change	Target 13.1: resilience and adaptive capacity; 13.b capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management
Goal 14: oceans	14.1 marine pollution and 14.5 preserve coastal areas
Goal 15: on terrestrial ecosystems	Target 15.9 By 2020, integrate ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning, development processes,
Goal 16: Peaceful societies and inclusive institutions	Targets 16.7 and 16.a: governmental subsidiarity and institutional capacity-building, 17.b non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development
Goal 17: on means of implementation and partnership for sustainable development	Targets 17.14 Policy coherence for sustainable development; 17.17 Effective public, public-private and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships.

87. The Paris agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21) has brought to the fore the need to combat climate change and strive towards a sustainable and resilient future. With important mandates regarding urban areas coming from both the Sustainable Development Goals and COP21, the importance of a national urban policy as a tool for government and as an indicator for positive urban development should continue to be recognized.

88. This section has highlighted key issues related to the design, implementation and monitoring of a national urban policy. The next section will highlight the key recommendations from the Expert Panel for the New Urban Agenda.

VI. Conclusion

89. The expert panel recommends that every country undertake the process of developing a national urban policy. These policies will take varied institutional forms, but harnessing urbanization for all through a policy process will need to take account of the following 10 recommendations:

(a) **International agreements**: national urban policy has proved to be valuable for implementing the Habitat Agenda and should be further mainstreamed as a critical instrument to implement the New Urban Agenda. The normative base of a national urban policy should additionally reflect existing international agreements, including:

(a) Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

(b) Paris Agreement;

(c) Sendai Framework;

(d) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(b) **Institutional form**: national urban policy is not necessarily solely a government process, however the institutional form of a national urban policy must create channels of participation and take into account the need to affect high-level change, including: legal reform, allocation of fiscal resources, generation of information on the overall urban system (including formal and informal), and integrated long-term urban planning and design that extends beyond the political cycle. Quality of legal frameworks signifies the ability to produce the regulatory reforms required by policy makers. Effective legislation must have a clear purpose, introduce consistent and well-thought-out rules and enforcement mechanisms, and unambiguous rules and obligations. Finally, it must allow for systematic monitoring and evaluation of the results of legislation. Implementing an evidence-based national urban policy process requires investment in civil service, research, university curricula, and educational opportunities;

(c) **Leadership**: there needs to both formal and informal political leadership from within government and/or from other stakeholders to ensure the legitimacy of the national urban policy process and effectiveness of implementation;

(d) **Inclusive and equitable**: a national urban policy needs to be inclusive and enable stakeholders to effectively engage in the process, making sure all voices are heard. The outcomes and impact need to promote equality, reach the most vulnerable, those most at risk, and the urban poor;

(e) **Sustainability and resilience**: a national urban policy has to address social, economic and ecological dynamics and the interplay between them in the territorial context;

(f) **Priority issues**: A national urban policy should be people-centred and needs to complement and not replicate strong sectorial strategies in areas such as infrastructure, water, energy, health, education, housing, social and economic inclusion policies. Ideally, a national urban policy will address the territorial, fiscal and institutional relationships across sectors. The policy should safeguard the interests and rights of both current and future generations and should be mindful of the natural ecosystem impacts of policy choices. A national urban policy provides the information platform or process to mediate long term versus short-term priorities across territorial scales, allowing difficult decisions to be debated and communicated with the public;

(g) **Coordination**: a national urban policy should emphasize and facilitate institutionalized and informal coordination and collaboration among different actors, sectors and functions across all scales and systems of cities. Coordination should consider national territorial concerns, including the urban-rural continuum; metropolitan, regional, and supranational urbanization dynamics and issues;

(h) **Capacity**: to be effective, a national urban policy process requires preparation, an institutional host, budget, training and opportunities for in-country and transnational peer-to-peer learning within and across governments and other stakeholders. Effective internal monitoring and evaluation should be built into the process;

(i) **Communication**: the national urban policy process should employ a multimedia communications strategy that is comprehensive and transparent as well as targeted to inform all civil servants, residents, media and other stakeholders both within and outside national boundaries. A communication strategy for a national

urban policy should also be used to promote broad awareness on the integrated nature of urban development;

(j) **Data**: a national urban policy should be grounded in the most current and comprehensive qualitative and quantitative data. The process of developing a national urban policy can be used to improve data collection systems and to develop new and additional data to improve disaggregation (e.g. gender and age), coverage (sector and geography) and the interoperability of data. Specific attention must be given to enumerating and making visible all aspects of urban informality. Data collected for a national urban policy needs to engage with global and local systems of data and should be open access.

Annex

[Original: English/Spanish]

Responses to Member State and stakeholder comments on Policy Unit 3 policy framework

1. The experts and co-leads of Policy Unit 3 would like to thank the member states and stakeholders that submitted comments on the Policy Unit 3 policy framework document. The comments were very insightful, extremely valuable and certainly have added much value to the policy paper. In order to endeavour to synthesize and incorporate the comments within the policy paper, members of Policy Unit 3 reviewed and responded to the comments. Responses can be found in the tables below.

Colombia

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
General comments	
• The Government of Colombia thanks the policy unit and the experts who contributed to the preparation of the policy paper, although it acknowledges that the paper is a work in progress	• Thank you for your comments. While concerns regarding the coordination between policy units may be beyond our scope as it is related to the Habitat III process, we will forward this recommendation to the Habitat III secretariat and/or to the other policy units
• We recommend dialogue and coordination between policy units, since the topics and subtopics addressed are also reflected in other policy papers	• Thank you for the suggestion to highlight structural elements to be part of the zero draft, please see the concluding remarks and key recommendations section where we have endeavoured to do so
• We suggest that the final versions of all policy papers follow strictly the same format, with information presented in a uniform manner, which will make them easier to read and analyse	
• We suggest that the key structural elements or building blocks that could be part of the future zero draft of the New Urban Agenda be summarized briefly at the end of each policy paper	
Specific comments on the content of the policy paper	
• The document is framed appropriately, as it sets out the thematic and conceptual boundaries of the National Urban Policy and of what will be addressed throughout the document	• The Policy Unit has been charged by the Habitat III secretariat to review the processes of urbanization, and we anticipate and advocate for growth in cities also have acknowledged that there are different dynamics of growth, such as shrinking cities
• The review and comments to the structural elements in issue papers are useful and illustrative of the scope of work of the policy paper	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• The paper starts from the premise that the growth of urban populations and cities is a fact, and does not question at any time whether this process should continue to be promoted or not. There may be countries that decide to limit urban population growth and promote rural population rather instead. In addition, owing to the country's green growth strategy, which is in line with the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, it is necessary to consider the urban-rural linkage as a central element in the formulation of the National Urban Policy	• While it is true the global trend of urbanization is not questioned, we emphasize that we consider that urbanization provides people with excellent opportunities for development (economic, environmental, and social). Furthermore, we will also endeavour to emphasize the existence of an urban/rural continuum in the paper. It is acknowledged that we must improve and emphasis this concept in the final draft of the paper. Please see paras. 34 and 52 and key recommendation 7, which highlighted the need for coordination and collaboration which includes rural areas. Additionally, please see para. 43 which highlights the need for national urban policy to tackle the challenges of adaptation and resilience and acknowledges the role of rural areas
Identification of challenges	
• The challenges identified in the policy paper are timely and were formulated in a manner that makes them easy to understand. They are specific in a balanced manner, respecting and providing for diversity and differences in contexts and capacities among States	• We fully agree with this comment and have endeavoured to more solidly make this connection within the policy paper. Please see paras. 42, 43, 50 and 90
• The Colombian cities system policy is taken as an example of national urban policy	
• It makes a significant contribution to territorial governance and interaction with the national order is not felt as a challenge in and of itself, but as a relationship which must be tailored to the needs in each context. In this connection, it is crucial to balance the bottom-up approach with the top-down approach in the development of national urban policies	
• We suggest that the balance needed between environmental, economic and social issues for sustainable development be identified as a challenge and a relevant element of national urban policies. While each country and territory has objectives and its unique context, urban planning beyond the physical understanding of space requires a balance between these aspects, and hence orientation within the parameters of flexibility and predictability	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• In this context, the identification of several goals and objectives of the 2030 Agenda that are relevant to the formulation of a National Urban Policy in section D.1 is very positive. Highlight explicitly how each of the interrelationships identified in the list could strengthen the document and help show concrete examples of the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda	• Please see section on 2030 Agenda, para. 97 and the concluding remarks and key recommendations, which aim to articulate how a national urban policy process might contribute to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda
• We welcome the identification in section D.2 of a list of indicators that could be considered. We suggest that the issue of the linkages between urban and rural areas and the urban-rural continuum be taken into account, not only for the indicator on territorial organization, but also for those pertaining to the environment, infrastructure and services, connectivity, and quality of life. The success of a National Urban Policy in all these areas depends on an adequate consideration of urban-rural linkages	• We have endeavoured to address these points. Please see the list in para. 5, which highlights quality of life being an ultimate goal of national urban policy, see the section on key priorities for national urban policy, para. 52, which include urban-rural linkages, infrastructure, and connectivity and see the list of key qualifiers in para. 53
Identification of priorities	
• In identifying the challenges, the document makes a relevant contribution by simultaneously defining the priorities that should be taken into account in the National Urban Policy • The section of the document that aims to provide criteria for the definition of each policy priority is considered a very valuable and useful effort to inform the definition of national policies that are reflective of national and regional goals and contexts • We recommend including among the criteria for defining each policy priority the identification of needs and the balancing of the economic, social and environmental aspects. This is consistent with the policy paper's view of the transformative power of urban policies, and the ability of these policies to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda	• We fully agree with the recommendations and the importance of balancing the economic, social, and environmental aspects when considering policy priorities. Every policy should be considered through these three lenses. See section III for a further discussion on the process of prioritization of policy options in national urban policy
• The list of changes identified in the section B.1 is also particularly useful as a vision that a National Urban Policy should have. The changes must include the need for an approach that takes into account urban-rural relations. Collaboration between should be strengthened not only between governments metropolitan areas but also among governments in rural municipalities, which is particularly significant for the respective cities; improvement of the quality of life of city dwellers depends directly on sustainable urban-rural linkages	• We have endeavoured to emphasis more the urban/rural continuum

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• The list of priorities identified in the policy paper (section B.2) is properly circumscribed and is substantive, and contributes to the definition of the Habitat Agenda	• We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of collaboration between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural. Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through a national urban policy
• One of the national priorities for the Habitat III Conference relates to priorities 3, 4 and 5. In this respect, we believe that it is essential to recognize and strengthen urban-rural relations, recognize rural areas and the urban-rural continuum as elements key to addressing the urbanization of countries and the dynamics of agglomeration	• We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of connectivity in terms of transport, communication, social, economic flow, etc. between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural areas. Please see paras. 6, 34, 35 and 52 and key recommendation 7
• In addition, it is crucial to also take into account urban-rural relations in relation to priority 1 on connectivity. It is necessary that cities are connected with each other and also with rural areas, on which they depend for the supply of environmental services and agricultural commodities, among other things	
• Also with regard to the priorities, we wish to point out that the environmental sustainability of the actions of cities includes responsibility for the measures taken by cities in addressing the environmental impacts created in rural areas, on which they depend also for their own sustainability. The most obvious example is the production of potable water, its use in the city and the disposal of wastewater	• The comment that the formulation and monitoring of national urban policy should be done based on the priorities and capacities of the country, is well noted. Please see para. 50 which highlights that the process of prioritization should be based on realistic capacity, among others. Please see section V, paras. 91 and 92 for suggestions regarding how to design and implement a national urban policy which can be adapted considering the context
• The suggested list of goals (in section (d)) could be better located under "implementation", since it is designed to encourage countries to initiate the process of developing a national urban policy, and continue to formulate and monitor such policy according to their national priorities and capacities	
Implementation	
• The recommendations for action contained in this section are substantive contributions to the definition of the Habitat III Agenda definition and are designed to encourage States that have not yet begun the process of developing a national urban policy to do so, and for those that are in the process of design, implementation and monitoring to develop specific guidelines for consideration during that process	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Considering that this policy paper has clearly identified the challenges, priorities and implementation framework, we recommend that work be done on a proposal on how the content of the document may be integrated in a cross-cutting manner into the other issues addressed under the multilateral agenda of Habitat III, fully ensuring that the agenda is properly circumscribed and is action oriented	• Thank you for the comment. Regarding working with other policy units, the structure of the process was given by the Habitat III secretariat, however please see section III which considers that while the priorities for a national urban policy can be many and can stretch across the themes of all policy units, it is essential that the prioritization of these themes happen at country level

Ecuador

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Urban governance	
• Among the challenges identified, the paper mentions that national urban policies related to transport and mobility should be framed within a broader context taking into account the issues of housing, land use and urban development policies at a metropolitan scale (defined in relation to settlements and human activity and not purely political and administrative boundaries). Nevertheless, in the sections on priorities and implementation, no further reference is made to that topic even though in the context of large urban centres, land use planning and transport and mobility planning are areas that require much coordination and mutual cooperation. These two areas are a perfect example of complementary policies, where the effectiveness of policies in one area depends heavily on the policies adopted in the other. In the same context, the Government of Ecuador sees a need to emphasize that it is essential to promote coordination between the agencies responsible for transport and mobility planning and the agency responsible for land use planning, especially in cities with high rates of population growth and urban sprawl. Moreover, although the document on national urban policy addresses the issue of inclusive cities, it discusses inequality and exclusion in very general terms. We therefore recommend a more in-depth analysis of the issue, bearing in mind that the main objective of inclusive cities is to ensure the inclusion of all people, especially those in vulnerable conditions	• Please refer to paras. 32 and 33 on land use planning and para. 39 on housing • It is noted that the transport and mobility sector must be considerate of housing, land use and urban development policies and that the idea of collaboration and connectivity between these thematic areas is key. Please see paras. 26 and 53 and key recommendations 6 and 7 for expanded comments on the importance of vertical and horizontal coordination and collaboration in national urban policy • It is acknowledged that inclusion can be a challenge for a national urban policy. Please see para. 29. The Policy Unit also acknowledges inclusiveness as a priority, please see para. 53

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• The text mentions that increasing attention has been given in recent years to the benefits of governing cities not as administrative units but as functional economies and that higher levels of government can have an important role in facilitating the cross-jurisdictional cooperation that is needed to improve regional integration in complex metropolitan areas. In this regard, the Government of Ecuador suggests including in the section on implementation different types of partnership arrangements for regional integration, such as groupings of municipalities or provinces. One of the reasons why it is advisable to establish partnership arrangements in the context of land management is that these mechanisms are particularly suitable for exploiting potential, streamlining management and overcoming land management bottlenecks, all of which normally extends beyond the boundaries of each territorial entity	• The importance of highlighting various partnering arrangements for regional integrations is well noted. Please see para. 53 which suggests the need for prioritizing the institutionalization of mechanisms of collaboration, such as councils, commissions, working groups, intergovernmental panels, etc.

European Union

General comments	*Reponses to comments*
• As a general comment with regard to all the policy papers, it should be noted that there is significant overlap in the priorities presented. Therefore, there is a need to align those overlapping priorities in order to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach to areas that are important under more than one area, thus setting the scene for a consistent set of actions under the New Urban Agenda. As regards the suggestion of establishing a High level panel on urbanization, it will need to be assessed carefully, against the need to ensure an effective linkage between the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and its review mechanism	• Thank you for your comments. While concerns regarding the coordination between policy units may be beyond our scope as it is related to the overall Habitat III process, we will forward this recommendation to the Habitat III secretariat and/or to the other policy units
• Good urban governance is enabled by a legal and policy framework at central level (national urban policy) that both enables local authorities to effectively implement national urban policies and empowers them as policy makers benefiting from a sufficient level of autonomy in decision-making in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. The resulting multi-level governance system requires political will from all echelons of government.	• The importance of highlighting collaboration and coordination is well noted. Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through a national urban policy. We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of connectivity in terms of transport, communication, social, economic flow etc., between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural areas.

General comments	*Reponses to comments*
Inter-municipal co-ordination typically requires support from higher levels of government. There has been increasing attention in recent years to the benefits of governing cities as functional economies rather than administrative units. The Functional Urban Areas method, applied in the framework of the European Union's regional development, rely on collaborative place-based approaches that allow for a closer relationship between territories and their economic base, which can combine planning and development policies	Please see paras. 6, 34, 35 and 52 and key recommendation 7. Please see para. 34 for a discuss on FUA
• Besides the challenges identified by the Policy Unit, a national urban policy, in order to respond adequately to the challenges and opportunities of urbanization, should support urban poverty reduction and promote the role of cities in sustainable development. However, there is often a lack of information both at national and local on urban poverty, so that comprehensive studies are required in order for this complex issue to be addressed in a national urban policy	• This is a very relevant comment. Dealing with complex issues such as urban poverty reduction is certainly a challenge for a national urban policy. See para. 19. Reduction in urban poverty and improving quality of life is highlighted in box 1 and in para. 53
• When developing the national urban policy, it is suggested to adopt both qualitative and quantitative analysis methods to conduct adequate and effective assessment of the status quo, which should cover several areas	• The importance of using both qualitative and quantitate methods, although the challenges associated with doing so are also acknowledged. Please see para. 53 and key recommendation 10 for a further discussion on the need for both qualitative and quantitative urban data
• Defining the scope of a national urban policy and achieving coordination across sectorial policies needs to be underlined as highly important. New urban policies need to provide the structure for coordination among ministries to ensure a multi-sectoral approach for cities, and support cooperation between national and local governments to allocate the necessary resources for public and private interventions	• The comment on highlighting importance of achieving coordination across sectorial policies is well noted. Please see box 1, point 1 and para. 53 and key recommendation 6
• In addition to the suggested indicators, additional key criteria could be: ensuring the use of spatial planning tools; preparing holistic land management; protecting public space and cultural and natural heritage conservation/restoration and rehabilitation	• Thank you for the suggested indicators. Please see para. 53 where public space and cultural heritage are listed as suggested key priorities for national urban policy
• In addition, instead of "increasing local fiscal space" it is important to clearly define the local fiscal space	• Thank you for the comment. Please see paras. 92(b) and (c). Please also refer to the policy paper from Policy Unit 5, Municipal finance

General comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Besides the financial and legislative capacity, policy priorities should be defined keeping in mind a realistic interpretation of the institutional capacity, including an assessment of the technical and managerial skills of the existing human recourses, and of the understanding of the national leaders and decision makers and other stakeholders on the role and value of sustainable urban development	
• We fully agree on the transformational character of the process leading to the national urban policy (not only the product) and support most of the priorities suggested, including connectivity among cities, urban, peri-urban and rural interaction (including management of ecosystem services) and the need for support from the central government. New urban policies should also focus on the need to define clear financial mechanisms to facilitate national and local authorities' access to financial resources; to attract domestic and foreign direct investment; to establish and improve revenue generation and collection systems at subnational level; and to engage in a transparent and productive way with the private sector	• Thank you for the comment. Please see paras. 28, 51 and 92(b) for discussion related to the need for strong financial frameworks and financial capacities of local governments. For more information, please refer to the policy paper from Policy Unit 5 on municipal finance
• There is also a need to develop and implement monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (including disaggregated data) to monitor progress and to document impacts of new urban policies. This includes the need of expanding and updating the information of the national and local cadastre	• Please see paras. 92(d) and 97(a), (b) and (c) for discussion regarding monitoring and evaluation. The need for urban data is also highlighted in key recommendation 10
• Key recommendations for action should aim at "integrated sustainable urban development". While coordination across all governments' departments/ sectors, and between national and local government and other relevant stakeholders/institution (including the academia and utilities providers) is highly important, this coordination is much more than the sharing and exchange of information. It implies an integrated approach to decision-making so that each sector reinforces other sectors within and across different departments	• The importance of highlighting collaboration and coordination is well noted. Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through a national urban policy. We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of connectivity in terms of transport, communication, social, economic flow etc., between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural areas. Please see paras. 6, 34, 35 and 52 and key recommendation 7 • Coordination between sectors and a national urban policy as a compliment to sectorial policies is highlighted in para. 92(c) and in key recommendations 6 and 7 • Please also see paras. 64, 83 and 88 on the facilitation of dialogue and the institutionalization of participation through the national urban policy process

General comments	*Responses to comments*
• Another asset for success is the existence of a good leadership within the national and local governments, aware of the short and long term benefits of sustainable urban development. This includes in particular support national governments in developing institutional (governance, administrative organization, human resource development) and financial reforms to support the development and implementation of a national urban policy	• Please see paras. 22 and 48 and key recommendation 3 where national leadership is highlighted as highly important
• In particular, support is needed to promote well-structured partnerships with multiple stakeholders (private sector, other levels of government, civil society, local communities) in decision-making and participatory planning. Support is also needed in the establishment of proper land management and planning systems, as they are critical to establishing the conditions necessary to improve security of tenure and more effective implementation of local planning laws and investments in services. The development and implementation of a national and municipal geographic information system, for instance, and the effective coordination of institutions involved in urbanization and the provision of infrastructure are key assets. New urban policies also foster economic activities and employment opportunities, along with equity and social integration in order to improve global living conditions of citizens, and to promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth for all	
• We agree on the recommendations on financial resources. Transparency in budgetary processes should be added	• Please see the policy paper of Policy Unit 5, Municipal finance
• The adoption of a clear and transparent policy and legal framework for public-private partnerships, in order to leverage private sector investments, is necessary	• Understanding the legal framework, political economy, and institutional settings are highlighted in paras. 91(b) and (c). Please also see the policy paper of Policy Unit 5, Municipal finance
• Key is also the establishment or update of national and local cadastres that brings together physical and fiscal information pertaining to the land of all the main cities	• Please see para. 97(b) which highlights the need for urban data

Finland

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Key priorities for national urban policies: (a) Metropolitan policies, cities as functional units; (b) Urban, peri-urban and rural interaction; (c) Management of ecosystem services; (d) Territorial and differentiated approach.	• Please see section III, particularly para. 53, on policy priorities where these important themes are mentioned • Additional references can be found here: • Metropolitan Areas and FUA: box 1, point 1 and 5, paras. 34 and 53 • Urban/rural: paras. 34, 35 and 53 and key recommendation 7 • Ecosystem: key recommendation 6 • Territorial and differentiated approaches: paras. 33, 53 and 54
Finland supports the following policy priorities stated in the policy paper:	
• Facilitating urban policies and governance at a metropolitan scale. Inter-municipal co-ordination typically requires support from higher levels of government. There has been increasing attention in recent years to the benefits of governing cities as functional economies rather than administrative units	• Thank you for the comments
• Strengthening urban, peri-urban and rural interactions to enhance and structure the environmental, social, economic and public policy connections and therefore promote functional linkages between urban, peri-urban and rural	
• Recognizing rural areas and the urban-rural continuum: Rural areas must be recognized within functional urban areas (FUA), however the importance of linkages to rural go beyond the FUA Policies need to address this, especially with respect to development of infrastructure and management of eco-system services (land and water, in particular)	
• Promoting a territorial and differentiated approach by considering key urban and territorial principles, such as those in the International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning	

Germany

Comments	*Reponses to comments*	*Further actions*
Germany would like to underline national urban policies as central prerequisites for effectively strengthening local level actors and implementing the New Urban Agenda. Adding to the draft framework, Germany would like to suggest:		
• Emphasizing the enabling conditions for local governance in the policy priorities	• Please see paras. 33, 53, 63, 81 for reference to empowering local governments. Please see paras. 48, 85 and 86 which discuss the need for an enabling environment for national urban policy	
• Clearly promoting the principle of subsidiarity within national urban policies	• Please see paras. 87 and 92(c)	
• Considering the issues of safer cities, internal migration, and urban resilience	• For reference to safety and security in cities, please see box 1, point 1 and para. 53. Please see paras. 43 and 53 and key recommendation 5 for a further discussion on resilience. Please see paras. 30 and 53 for consideration of migration and a national urban policy	
• Emphasizing the inclusion of urban poor and vulnerable persons	• The issue of inclusion is considered in paras. 29 and 53	
• Elaborating on opportunities for intensified peer-exchange and knowledge sharing between countries with national urban policies and countries that have just started to develop it (e.g. as pursued by Germany through its "Urbanization Partnerships")	• Peer learning is considered as a key element and tool for policy design. Please see para. 52 and key recommendation 8	• Further consideration should be given to the role of international organizations in facilitating peer exchange on national urban policies • National governments should be encouraged to explore other examples of national urban policy development as Germany has done via the "Urbanization Partnerships"

Comments	*Reponses to comments*	*Further actions*
• National urban policies should include specific capacity development measures to address complex urban management challenges. We therefore suggest considering the overlap with Policy Unit 4. In addition, links to finance mechanisms are necessary in order to enable local governments to act according to their mandates. We therefore suggest considering the overlap with Policy Unit 5	• Capacity development is seen as a key element of policy design and implementation. See key recommendation 8 on the need to address capacity issues. The comment has also been passed to Policy Unit 4 and Policy Unit 5	

Myanmar

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Recommend greater recognition of the fact that development of a national urban policy is an inherently difficult process, requiring high-level commitment (i.e. President's office or similar):	• See para. 19 that refers the complexity of problems which a national urban policy addresses. National urban policy is acknowledged as a complex policy endeavour in para 94
• Urban functions and finances split between national, local, and intermediate levels of government	• The importance of highlighting collaboration and coordination is well noted. Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through a national urban policy. We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of connectivity in terms of transport, communication, social, economic flow etc., between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural areas. Please see paras. 6, 34, 35 and 52 and key recommendation 7
• Urban functions split between different ministries and departments, at the same and different levels	• National urban policy is acknowledged as a long-term evolving process in para. 60
• Coordination of these actors very difficult: need extremely effective coordination mechanism and acceptance from all actors	
• Difficult to engage broad community in such abstract policy	
• Challenge: in countries without a strong understanding of the "urban agenda", and the potential for economic development and environmental benefits that urbanization brings, "urbanization" can be seen as "urban planning". There is a need to develop a greater awareness of a urbanization as a cross-cutting social and economic trend, rather than the domain of urban planning and infrastructure provision	• The comment regarding the awareness of urbanization a valid and relevant one and it is hoped that the Habitat III process will work to raise awareness of the integrated nature of urbanization. The value of a national urban policy as a tool for raising awareness can be shown also in section V when considering the links between national urban policy and the 2030 Agenda, para. 98. In key recommendation 9, national urban policy is also acknowledged as a tool that can be used to promote broad awareness on the integrated nature of urban development

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Challenge: development of a national urban policy, and particularly monitoring and evaluation of its implementation, can require a significant investment of time and resources from all actors involved. In developing countries, this may be a burden on both lead agency and other implementers. Efficient and effective methods of policy formulation and monitoring and evaluation need to be developed which are responsive to the resources of the national context, in light of competing priorities	• Thank you for the comment. The formulation and monitoring of a national urban policy should be done based on the priorities and capacities of the country. Please see para. 50 which highlights that the process of prioritization should be based on realistic capacity, among others. Please see section V, paras. 91 and 92 for suggestions regarding how to design and implement a national urban policy which can be adapted considering the context • Reference can also be made to para. 66 which highlights that a national urban policy can take different shapes and forms in order to allow for its applicability in different country contexts
• Key Priorities: section 2b comments that "although many policy domains were exclusively under national jurisdictions in the past, now most areas of domestic policy are a shared responsibility" • Needs recognition that, although this is the case in many European and North American contexts, in the global south many policy issues are still under solely national jurisdictions, which complicates development of a national urban policy	• Throughout the paper we consider the importance of integrated governance and that, although national urban policy sits at the national level, that it should engage and include subnational governments as key partners and stakeholders. Please see paras. 53, 64 and 73
• Key priorities: the importance and demands of a national urban policy need to be clearly communicated to local stakeholders and implementing agencies, who may often be unaware of the rationale for or intent of an national urban policy	• See para. 23 which speaks to the need for common language in policy development. Please see para. 51 and key recommendation 9 which highlight the importance of a communications strategy for national urban policy • Also, please see section IV which has been written with the intent that the rationale that the national urban policy is developed and defined by the national government and stakeholders in a process where all actors should be effectively engaged so that they can actively define the agenda and have shared roles and responsibilities
• List of key priorities: suggest addition: a national urban policy can help to define or clarify the system of urban governance include roles, responsibilities, objectives, and coordination, where this is not specified in a constitution or other legislation	• The importance of a strong system of urban governance is very relevant. See para. 75 which highlights the need for a process which includes legislative and judiciary roles and the need for building awareness in different spheres in paras. 83 and 91 which considers understanding the context of a national urban policy

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• List of key priorities: suggest strengthening point 8 (supporting cities actions for environmental sustainability): A national urban policy can set out handful of overarching principles for urban development — i.e., cities should develop to ensure social, economic, and environmental sustainability; cities should be equitable; cities should develop in a way that encourages local economic development, public transport usage etc.	• See para. 43 which highlights the role of a national urban policy and adaptation, resilience, and the green agenda

Japan

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Create territorial/regional spatial strategy to deal with rapid urbanization	• See paras. 32 and 33 on land use planning. See para. 53 on the use of a territorial and differentiated approach
• In many countries, recent economic disparity between cities and rural areas is one of the aspects that are prompting the influx of people from rural areas to cities and thus further promote rapid urbanization. Hence, the rapid urbanization needs to be understood as a problem nationwide as well as a problem to cities	
• National urban policy discussed in the Policy Unit 3 needs to cover not only improving the urban environment but preparing and implementing planning at national and regional level	
• In order to support governments and subnational governments to prepare and implement such strategies, creating a platform for collecting and exchanging knowledge and experiences of spatial strategies with disseminating the "International Guidelines for Urban and Territorial Planning" prepared by UN-Habitat will be one of key actions	
• Promoting quality infrastructure investment for making society inclusive, safe, resilient, sustainable and convenient	• Please see paras. 41 and 42
• Quality infrastructure investment is essential for sustainable urban development, furthermore positively related to the achievement of social, economic and political goals, and especially contributes to Goal 9 and Goal 11 of the "Sustainable Development Goals"	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Because of the importance of quality infrastructure investment for sustainable urban development, it is strongly recommended that quality infrastructure investment is included in the Urban Agenda for the Habitat III	
• Creating strategy for shrinking city	• The importance of a national urban policy being relevant to all urbanization contexts is noted. Please see paras. 12 and 18 which reference shrinking cities and para. 18 which references both population growth and loss
• The New Urban Agenda is required to meet the needs of different circumstances around cities, namely developing cities, developed cities and shrinking cities. While many cities are growing rapidly in the world, more cities are anticipated to be shrinking. Strategy is also required for shrinking cities as well as growing cities. In shrinking cities, one of the most significant challenges will be how to maintain urban functions needed for business activities as well as people's daily life. A concept of fundamental strategy for maintaining such functions is a "Compact and Networked approach" in which regions as well as cities are made compact and linked through networks to maintain accessibility. Japan, as a country facing rapid depopulation and aging, is ready to provide our knowledge and experiences on how to deal with shrinking cities	

Norway

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• The government of Norway agrees that national urban policies should help to align sectorial policies that affect urban areas, and develop an enabling institutional environment	
• Norway also agrees that urbanization presents challenges as well as opportunities, and that legislation on the national, regional and local level must support local government in their efforts to create sustainable cities. This is also a must for municipal finance	
• Norway does not agree with "Urbanization is an increasing urgent global phenomenon, and is having a particularly dramatic effect on the landscape of all countries". However, Norway does agree that there is a difference in challenges between the cities in most European and North American countries and those in developing and emerging countries	• Thank you for your comment, we would like to ask for additional clarification on particularly which part of the statement is not agreed with. The Policy Unit has tried to differentiate between the different challenges countries are struggling with — urban population loss/growth, shrinking cities, rapid urbanization, etc. Please see para. 18

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Norway participated in producing the International Guidelines of Urban and Territorial Planning, and would like to promote these guidelines as a good framework for creating national urban policies, which has also been done in this paper	
• Norway supports the focus on strengthening partnerships with civil society organizations, including youth and women's organizations	
Priorities	
• Para. 1, A1 on issue paper 5: Urban rules and regulation — Norway recommends a rather substantial process in order to implement national urban policy. We are afraid that the amount of effort these three actions are proposing might be too much for countries with small resources and/or least developed countries	• The comment that the formulation and monitoring of national urban policy should be done based on the priorities and capacities of the country, is well noted. Please see para. 50 which highlights that the process of prioritization should be based on realistic capacity, among others. Please see section V, paras. 91 and 92 for suggestions regarding how to design and implement a national urban policy which can be adapted considering the context
• Para. 1 also talks of urban law. Norway would like to emphasize that national legislation often applies to administrative borders and not city limits. These administrative borders might include one city and its suburban and rural surroundings, sometimes these administrative borders include more than one city. Norway acknowledges the importance of adequate legislation, but suggest this is taken into consideration in the process ahead	• This comment was considered in the drafting of the final paper. Please see key recommendation 2 which discusses the need for adequate legal frameworks. Please also see para. 91(b) which discusses the need to map existing legal frameworks prior to undertaking the national urban policy process, including their administrative boundaries
• Norway supports the listed crucial points of issue paper 6: Urban governance	
• The important point no. 1 draw from issue paper 7: Municipal finance, states that "often municipal finance capacity is closely tied to governance reform". Norway finds that a rather strong postulate. It might need to be nuanced. Norway supports the rest of the important points drawn from issue paper 7	• This comment was considered in the drafting of the final paper and is addressed in the policy paper by Policy Unit 5, Municipal finance
• Issue paper 9: Urban land. Norway supports the need to control urban sprawl and protect sensitive areas and such take sustainability into consideration	
• Issue paper 10: Urban-rural linkages. Norway would again refer to the International Guidelines of Urban and Territorial Planning	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Norway suggests adding text regarding environmental aspects/green development, in addition to aspects from issue paper 15 on resilience. The text concentrates on climate change, and we appreciate the fact that this is included, and that both mitigation and adaption is mentioned. However, it is also important to include other environmental challenges, such as air pollution. The division between national and urban policies regarding such pollution should be discussed, often there are national policies in place, but also urban policies are needed in order to address the problem (e.g in case of emergencies when levels are dangerously high). An attractive, functional urban environment is important for well-being and public health. Easy access to frequently needed services, clean air and green, safe and welcoming surroundings are all important to city-dwellers	• Please see paras. 44, 53 and 98 where controlling air pollution and carbon emissions are highlighted as priorities • The importance of an attractive and functional urban environment is considered in para. 36 on public/civil space and paras. 45-47 on urban design
• Issue paper 19, page 8: transport and mobiiity. It is important to address this also within the environmental policy context. Pollution and climate change aspects are important when designing urban transport policies. Compact urban development patterns are needed to make it possible to provide efficient public transport and encourage more people to walk and cycle. Promoting compact urban development is both sound climate policy and improves local air quality and people's health. The International Guidelines of Urban and Territorial Planning are relevant also here	
• Under the Sustainable Development Goals and targets where national urban policies are important, Goal 3 is on health, but here it says gender, which is Goal 5. We believe health should be added, including target 3.9 on pollution, which is important, for example air pollution is largely a challenge for cities	• The error has been amended and Goal 3 has been added
Challenges	
• a.2. Disagreements/controversies	
• No. 1: Norway agrees to the view that urbanization also represent opportunities and increased prosperity, productivity and well-being. We agreed that a national urban policy that recognizes that, and captures the opportunities, is a crucial ingredient for building cities that are sustainable, productive, liveable and inclusive	
• No. 6: balancing top-down and bottom-up approaches. Norway agrees that national urban policies must be developed through cooperation, dialogue, institutionalized participation and mutual respect. Knowledge and acknowledge of the real needs,	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
aspirations and agendas of a variety of local people and organizations and the municipalities is crucial for a mutual understanding and acceptance of the national urban policy	
• In general Norway agrees with the main identified criteria for defining policy priorities. We would however, suggest that the process which priorities are identified could be differentiated. We will not recommend that all countries must undergo the same vast process, as many countries already do have a national urban policy	• This comment is noted. Please see para. 50
• Criteria No. 4 states that defining policy priorities should take into consideration realistic financial and legislative capacity	• This was considered in section IV regarding building institutions and institutional capacity. Also, as noted above, the Expert Group would like to emphasize that the formulation and monitoring of a national urban policy should be done based on the priorities and capacities of the country. Please see para. 50 which highlights that the process of prioritization should be based on realistic capacity, among others. Please see section V, paras. 91 and 92 for suggestions regarding how to design and implement a national urban policy which can be adapted considering the context
• Norway agrees with the list of key transformations	
• Norway supports the list of key priorities, and suggest that the list is included in the summary/introduction on page 3. We further support the statement that a national urban policy is highly dependent on context and will need to vary depending on the circumstances. We especially support No. 6 where the international guidelines are being promoted, and No. 7 where the safety and security of children are mentioned among the different vulnerable population groups	
• Norway supports the idea that a national urban policy that places sustainability at its core can be an important tool for government to support cities in their adaptation and mitigation efforts in order to ensure that cities remain liveable and resilient while facing the impacts of climate change and other environmental threats	
• List of other indicators, here we suggest adding indicators on environmental threats, for example urban air pollution levels, which are relevant for three of the Sustainable Development Goal targets. (3.9, 7.1 and 11.6)	• Please see para. 96 which highlights resilience to climate change as an indicator and table 1 which shows the Sustainable Development Goals and targets with links to national urban policy

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Implementation	
• Here, we suggest mentioning green development/creating a green vision, as a specific issue, alternatively mention it under point 3	• Please see paras. 43 and 44 and key recommendation 5
• Links with 2030 Agenda/Paris Agreement, we suggest adding air pollution-opportunities here, in addition to climate change aspects. There are three 2030 Agenda targets on air pollution, which are relevant for cities	• See para. 98

United States of America

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Support	
• Although the United States does not have a national urban policy, we support the thorough and multi-dimensional approach to developing urban, municipal, metropolitan and regional policies — and the need for strong rural policy and urban-rural linkages — to ensure inclusive, equitable, sustainable and resilient communities for all	• Thank you for the comments and we have endeavoured in include the ethos of these comments in the paper and with strengthen some of these priorities throughout the paper, particularly on housing and communities
• The United States supports locally-led collaborative efforts that bring together diverse interests from the many municipalities in a region to determine how best to target housing, economic and workforce development, and infrastructure investments to create more jobs and regional economic activity	
• On the national level, the United States supports federal interagency coordination through principles that incorporate principles of liveability into federal funding programme, policies, and future legislative proposals, which are: (a) Provide more transportation choices: develop safe, reliable and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote public health; (b) Promote equitable, affordable housing: Expand location- and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation;	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
(c) Enhance economic competitiveness: Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centres, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers as well as expanded business access to markets;	
(d) Support existing communities: target federal funding toward existing communities — through such strategies as transit-oriented, mixed-use development and land recycling — to increase community revitalization, improve the efficiency of public works investments, and safeguard rural landscapes;	
(e) Coordinate policies and leverage investment: Align federal policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy;	
(f) Value communities and neighbourhoods: enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighbourhoods — rural, urban, or suburban.	
Gaps/recommendations	
• Page 14: "Goal 3: gender" should be "Goal 5: gender"	• The error has been amended
• Page 14: additional related Sustainable Development Goals and targets should also include Goal 3: health, 3.6 road fatalities, 3.8 access to universal health coverage, 3.9 hazardous chemicals and air, water and soil pollution and contamination	• Goal 3 has been added
• Page 14: additional related Sustainable Development Goals and target should also include Goal 14: oceans, 14.1 marine pollution and 14.5 preserve coastal areas	• Goal 14 has been added
• Pages 18-20: there is some degree of overlap between "transformations" enabled by the national urban policies and "key priorities". For example, improving business environment (p. 18) should be a priority to achieve the transformation in investment potential	• Thank you for the comment, we have endeavoured to deal with this in the policy paper
• Page 19: National urban policies can also facilitate knowledge sharing between cities within a country, and also between countries to promote innovation in addressing urban challenges	• Peer learning is considered as a key element and tool for policy design. Please see para. 52 and key recommendation 8

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Page 19: national urban policies can also promote science, technology, and data standardization, collection, and utilization	• See para. 25 where there is reference to smart cities. Para. 51 and key recommendation 10 which highlights the need for robust urban data
• Page 21: list of targets should extend to 2036, to the end of a 20-year agenda	• Targets are meant to reference the tracking of the 2030 Agenda
• Page 23: financial resources can include not just mapping existing flows, but mobilizing additional domestic resources to enhance financing for national urban policy	• See section V, para. 93 and the policy paper from Policy Unit 5 on municipal finance

Habitat International Coalition

Comments	*Responses to comments*
• This paper includes no mention of the Habitat II commitments nor the international/United Nations human rights mandatory framework and instruments ; nor does it include any reference to the other policy papers (some others have)	• Thank you for the comment. This was not understood as part of the mandate of the Policy Unit, although it is acknowledged that this is an important exercise
• On the other hand, it's the only paper that actually includes a revision on some key recommendations arising from most of the issue papers (except No. 4 on urban culture and heritage, No. 8 on urban and spatial planning and design, No. 13 on jobs and livelihoods, No. 16 on urban ecosystems and resource management, No. 17 on cities and climate change and No. 22 on informal settlements — why?) and their linkages with the national urban policies — particular emphasis is on issue papers 5, 6 and 7 because they "were highlighted by the Habitat III secretariat as being particularly pertinent for Policy Unit 3" This also raises very serious questions about the relationship between policy units and the Habitat III secretariat — what is their level of autonomy? How are they going to treat the outcome of their work. It includes some important issues/criteria: recognition of informality, rural-urban continuum, cross-sectorial planning, coordination among different levels (should be replaced by "spheres") of governments, partnership and collaboration with communities, "national governments must engage with the real needs, aspirations and agendas of people in particular places", etc.; but these are mixed with many others related to a much more technocratic approach — it even mentions the need of a "strong technocratic/expert component" Totally missing is the need of land policy as a key component of any national urban policy	• In the paper, we have addressed the issue of informal settlements and informality in paras. 39 and 40 • Land is recognized as a challenge and priority for national urban policy in paras. 31, 52 and 53. Please also see the policy paper from Policy Unit 6: Urban spatial strategies which deals directly with land issues

Comments	*Responses to comments*
Challenges and priorities	
• Once again, no analysis (or even mention!) of the root causes of the urbanization process, but the repetition of the well-known mantra about "its potential to increase prosperity, productivity, and well-being" and a very simplistic accusatory line of the "narrow view" that sees it "mainly as a source of problems". That is particularly shocking and in fact counterproductive to the approach and contents of this paper, that makes a strong point for the need of national urban policies. If urbanization is presented as a kind of inevitable natural force or supra-human trend to which we simply need to conform and adapt to, then there is/will be very little room for human/rational control over it, so what would be the point in developing a national urban policy?!	• An analysis of the root causes of urbanization were not within the mandate of the Policy Unit. In terms of the urbanization process, even if urbanization is happening anyway, it can be better managed through tools/processes like a national urban policy
• When identifying disagreements/controversies (a.2) the paper makes a strong point for the need of national urban policies as "a crucial ingredient for building cities that are sustainable, productive, liveable and inclusive", as a result of "balancing top-down and bottom-up elements", including the "right (!?) stakeholders together (government and non-government) as well as the right (!?) expertise"; long-term vision but at the same time needs to be flexible to change/adapt (mid-term goals and action oriented policy); paying attention to the delicate tension between identifying priorities and integrating/aligning policies across sectors/levels	• Please see para. 94 on iterative policy design
• It also stresses the need to understand the scope of national urban policy not only as physical urban planning but to see other policies that have huge implications for cities "through an 'urban lens'" — this is certainly fundamental and will make more evident the need for a territorial and integral approach. It is also related to the "need to undertake institutional and policy mapping" in order to provide greater coherence (many OECD countries have eight ministries, national-level departments or agencies with urban policy functions)	• We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of collaboration between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural. Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through national urban policy • We have endeavoured to strengthen the ideas of connectivity in terms of transport, communication, social, economic flow, etc., between, national, metropolitan, small/intermediate towns, cities, and rural areas. Please see paras. 6, 34, 35 and 52 and key recommendation 7 • Please see para. 53 on the use of a territorial and differentiated approach
• Although it's obvious for most of the actors/sectors, it's certainly positive the understanding of the national urban policy as a "process" and not just as a "product"; and, at the same time as "both a technical and a political process" — but the latter should so first (also for obvious reasons). The papers highlights more than once that, in order "to have legitimacy and to be	

Comments	Responses to comments
implemented successfully, a large number of public and private actors at all levels should be involved in the design, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy and must believe that the policy process is open, fair and transparent". Several mentions are also included about the need to articulate subnational and local governments (responsibilities/powers/resources)	
• This paper make a strong connection between the national urban policy and the Sustainable Development Goals: "national urban policy can serve as key instrument to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11 on Cities, Goal 6 on Sanitation, and Goal 8 on Economic Development". Further on (under the "priorities" section) the connection between the two is stronger: "National urban policies constitute an important part of any serious attempt to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, not merely Goal 11. Most of the Sustainable Development Goals have evident urban" (by the way, not just urban but territorial) "dimensions and cannot be realized without addressing what happens in cities" (b.1, pp.17-18). The paper includes a useful although limited list of key themes/issues linked to national urban policy in every Sustainable Development Goal (d.1, p.14)	
• The short list of possible indicators or key criteria for a national urban policy includes the more or less classic mentions to land-use efficiency, effective urban governance systems, productivity and connectivity... but no mention to any human rights and other previous commitments (Habitat Agenda) — i.e. need to track land redistribution/access/security of tenure, evictions, vacant/empty plots/buildings, recognize and support SPH, measure the negative impacts of "development", etc.	• Please see key recommendation 1 which recommends normative base of a national urban policy should additionally reflect existing international agreements including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
• It also stresses the need of a "strong communication strategy" and an "inclusive dialogue aiming to establish a consensus" — but that is presented in a very limited way to "introduce the process and invite all to be involved" without mention of other relevant criteria/conditions for substantive participation in the decision-making process and the need of a permanent/institutionalized space — clear rules, aiming to provide equal opportunities to different actors, etc.	• Please see paras. 23, 52, 63 and 85 and key recommendation 7 for further discussion on the strengthening of collaboration through national urban policy • Please see para. 53 which suggests the need for prioritizing the institutionalization of mechanisms of collaboration, such as councils, commissions, working groups, intergovernmental panels, etc. • Please see paras. 85 and 86 which consider the creation of enabling environments for national urban policy

Comments	*Responses to comments*
• It certainly surprising that the reader needs to wait until p. 18 to actually know that "Improved quality of life is the ultimate aim" of any national urban policy — there is no mention to "human dignity" or human rights. Equally shocking, under the list of key priorities: "promoting equitable opportunity in cities, addressing urban poverty, segregation and inequality" is No. 4; "considering safe and security" No. 7; "supporting cities' actions for environmental sustainability" is No. 8 out of 10 — while "structuring the urban systems and the connectivity among cities" and "facilitating urban policies and governance at a metropolitan scale" came first on the list. Important recognition of rural-urban continuum but kind of repeated and disconnected in No. 3 and No. 5	• Please see key recommendation 1 which recommends normative base of a national urban policy should additionally reflect existing international agreements including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Key recommendation 6 also highlights the role of national urban policy in safeguarding the interests and rights of current and future generations
• It includes a list of targets (p. 21) related to the number of countries developing/implementing/monitoring national urban policy by 2020, 2025 and 2030 but no mention to the must-have contents and methodology — including stakeholder participation mechanisms in the process of developing a national urban policy; it should also qualify that participation and add it to the implementation and monitoring processes as well	See section V on suggestions for the design and implementation of national urban policy and para. 53 on the institutionalization of participation
Implementation	
• b.1 Financial resources Mention of "mechanism of value capture and sharing" without any further details	• The importance of communities is discussed in box 1, point 3 and para. 72. Financial mechanisms for national urban policy are addressed in para. 95 but are dealt with in more detail by Policy Unit 5, Municipal finance
• No recognition of people's and communities' contributions to the actual/potential implementation of urban policies and plans — Again, promotion of "improved PPPs" without mention of social actors	
• c.2 Monitoring mechanisms "Outcome monitoring may be linked to Sustainable Development Goals reporting system" — should?! "In this context, stakeholders can play an important role in monitoring the impact of a national urban policy" — should!	• Point is taken and language will be amended in the policy paper

Helpage International

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
General comments on all policy units frameworks	
• Inclusive cities: signatories welcome the call for inclusive cities that recognize the primacy of the rights and well-being of residents over private economic interests and the overwhelming commodification of the city. As an increasing number of people grow old in an urban environment, cities must respond with policies and approaches that protect and promote our rights throughout our life course including into older age. This requires an awareness of the demographic trends impacting cities including the reality of rapidly ageing urban populations. A social perspective on streets, public spaces, housing and infrastructure, demands that we create supportive and inclusive environments and communities that encourage healthy living, social and intergenerational interaction, access to a diversity of flexible income generating opportunities and build resilience to climate change and emergencies	• Thank you for the comments and we consider all these themes as very relevant and have endeavoured to embed them within the policy paper
• Collective rights to the city: The overwhelming privatization, marketization and commodification of public space undermines collective rights to the city to the detriment of those who are already marginalized due to poverty or discrimination based on their gender, age, ethnic origin, sexuality, disability or other characteristics. The devaluation of older people's livelihoods and participation in the informal economy further marginalizes our voices from decision making	
• The city as a social construct: The conceptualization of the city as not only a physical space, but a social construct that locates individuals in a particular context is welcomed. Ageist attitudes and systematic forms of discrimination act to marginalize our participation, devalue our presence and challenge our right to the city as both a physical and social space as we grow older	
• Hostile spaces: as discussed in the papers, cities are often hostile to older people and those living with disabilities, particularly when using public transportation and inhabiting public space. The solution to this challenge must go beyond simply providing physical access to these spaces but must also challenge those rules and norms that prioritize private economic interests, encourage the flow of pollution generating traffic and risk our safety and security. Reprioritizing our streets and public spaces to protect and promote the rights of all residents throughout their lives, whether they be children, people living with disabilities, older people or adults in or out of work, requires a redefinition of the purpose of the city	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
• Participation: to deliver these changes to our cities, full participation and inclusion in local decision making throughout our lives is vital. The reality of rapidly ageing urban populations further supports the need for the meaningful participation of older people in decision making to ensure that our cities protect and promote all of our rights throughout our lives and into our older age. A failure by local authorities and stakeholders to make inclusive and accountable decisions has led to cities dominated by private economic interests, pollution generating traffic, poorly managed and disruptive regeneration programmes and inhospitable urban spaces and streets. City residents face multiple forms of intersecting discriminations, the impacts of which accumulate in older age, and so our cities, through local government, policy makers, planners and stakeholders must play a positive role in protecting and promoting our rights	

Institute for Global Environmental Strategies

Section	*Page Number*	*Comments input*	*Reponses to comments*
a.2 Disagreements/controversies	11	• 7. Designing the governance of the process of formulating, implementing and monitoring a national urban policy: if the national urban policy is to have legitimacy and to be implemented successfully, a large number of public (private and civil society actors) at all levels who will be involved in the design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of a national urban policy must believe that the policy process is open, fair and transparent	• Please see section IV on key actors for actions
d.2 List of other indicators to be taken into account	15	• Other examples of indicators: employment	• Thank you for the comment
b.2 List of key priorities	20	• 6. Promoting a territorial and differentiated approach by [...] Particularly, empowering local governments (and communities) through (participatory) planning [...]	• Thank you for the comment, we have highlighted the need for a territorial and differentiated approach in para. 53

Section	*Page Number*	*Comments input*	*Reponses to comments*
		• 8. Supporting cities' actions for environmental sustainability, particularly controlling pollution (managing waste) and climate mitigation (and) adaptation	• Please see paras. 33, 53, 63 and 81 for reference to empowering local governments
			• Environmental sustainability is referenced in para. 43
c. List of external factors	20	• Market environment (i.e., available finance for technologies)	• The importance of improving the business environment is mentioned in para. 5

Earth System Governance Project

Comments	*Responses to comments*
• The policy brief provide a large variety of relevant Sustainable Development Goals. However Goal 14 is not listed. Goal 14 refers to the "conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resource's"	• Goal 14 has been added into the list of relevant Sustainable Development Goals and targets
• However, target 14.1 and 14.b refer also to relevant aspects	
• 14.1: by 2025, prevent and significantly reduce marine pollution of all kinds, in particular from land-based activities, including marine debris and nutrient pollution	
• 14.b: provide access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets	
• Therefore Goal 14 and the above listed targets should be incorporated into the policy brief	

World Future Council

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Rationale: • The Habitat III policy paper framework 3 on national urban policy as well as many other policy paper frameworks already recognize the existing gap between national and local policy making and the lack of good communication, coordination and consistency between these two levels of government. The inability of local actors to have a formal voice at the national level is in fact a critical limiting factor for the effective transition towards a more sustainable urban future • As already extensively described in the Habitat III policy paper framework III, the creation of national urban policies would help to mitigate the fragmentation among different levels of governance, to align "sectorial polices that affect urban areas" and develop "an enabling institutional environment"	
Comment: • In section 3.a.1 of the Habitat III policy paper framework 3, recommendation No. 3 suggests "Creating a National vision/strategy for urban policies, with clear objectives, targets, responsible institutions and implementation and monitoring mechanisms". However, greater emphasis should be given to the need to create a specific commission or institution to coordinate the design and implementation of these national urban policies. The World Future Council (WFC) therefore suggests to recommend the establishment of a national urban policy commissions (NUPC), and include this point as a separate recommendation in the list. Such cross-ministerial commissions would be led by the national government and would help to bridge incompatibilities between local and national legislations and hence help the effective and consistent implementation of national programmes within the local context (e.g. sustainability programmes). national urban policy Commissions would be the institutional platform for the design as well as the implementation and monitoring of national urban policies	• Thank you for the comment and the elaboration on the need for an institutional body to guide the national urban policy process. The Policy Unit feels that this is an important way to achieve the institutionalization of participation of national urban policy that is strongly recommended in the paper in various places throughout. Please particularly see para. 29 and the final point in para. 53
Specific suggested additions to the text: • In section 3.a.1, the following point should be added to the list of action-oriented recommendations: 4. Create national urban policy Commissions in charge of designing, implementing and monitoring national urban policies and coordinating collaboration and communication across government departments and across levels of government	

Comments	*Reponses to comments*

Further background:

- Key benefits related to the creation of national urban policy commissions (NUPC) include:

  (a) Improve coordination across levels of governments, especially between national and municipal level;

  (b) Improve consistency between levels of government to ensure coherence between different policies in particular between national, regional and municipal policies;

  (c) Empower local authorities to take action and give them the appropriate political mandate and financial resources to carry out the needed transformations, in line with national and international priorities and guidelines

  (d) Strengthen political commitment for sustainable urbanization and promote mobilization of all relevant stakeholders;

  (e) Foster cooperation among jurisdictions and cities across the country;

  (f) Create a unified national vision for urban development;

  (g) Mitigate the short-termism of politics by creating a body that ensures continuity throughout different political mandates and ensures coherent, continual and long-term political commitment for cities;

  (h) Reinforce the understanding of urban matters and necessary national policies interventions;

  (i) Promote capacity-building needed to enable governments and administrative bodies to work across departments and across levels of government;

  (j) Balance the development across urban, peri-urban and rural areas and strengthen linkages between urban and rural areas and coordination between city centres and surrounding metropolitan areas;

  (k) Ensure adequate implementation of national policies at the local level;

  (l) Supervise monitoring and ensure appropriate feedback is delivered from cities to the national government in order to carry out necessary improvements and policy changes.

Comments	*Reponses to comments*
Examples of existing governmental bodies in charge of coordinating national urban policies: • Australian Minister for Cities and the Environment http://theconversation.com/urban-policy-could-the-federal-government-finally-get-cities-47858 http://www.directory.gov.au/directory?ea0_lf99_120.&organizationalRole&845a bec8-a7f2-4edc-a24f-b8886288b936 • United Kingdom Minister for Cities http://www.theworkfoundation.com/blog/517/UK-Minister-for-Cities https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers/minister-of-state-for-cabinet-office- -2#previous-holders-of-this-role • Brazilian Ministry of Cities https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Cities • World Future Council Reports highlighting the lack of coordination across government levels and the need for coordination bodies for improved multi-level governance: • H. Girardet, S. Schurig, A. Leidreiter and F. Woo, "Towards the Regenerative City," World Future Council, Hamburg, 2013. http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/Towards_Re generative_Cities_web_01.pdf • F. Woo, J. Wortmann, S. Schurig and A. Leidreiter, "Regenerative Urban Development: A Roadmap to the City We Need," World Future Council, Hamburg, 2014. http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user_upload/PDF/WFC_Report_2014__Regenerative_Urban_Development_A_Roadmap_to_the_City_We_Need.pdf • World Future Council, "Imagine a Regenerative City," World Future Council, Hamburg, 2014. http://www.worldfuturecouncil.org/fileadmin/user_upload/Climate_and_Energy/Cities/Imagine_A_Regenerative_City_-_FCF_Report_2014_-_digital.pdf	

International Organization for Migration

Policy Unit 3 would like to sincerely thank the International Organization for Migration for its extensive and valuable comments. Please see para. 30 which has been added to illustrate the importance of the challenges of migration and para. 53 which lists migration as a key priority for national urban policy.

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